

THE CHURCH'S UNDERSTANDING OF DEATH AND THE
DEAD : WITH REFERENCE TO TRADITIONAL EFFUTU
BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

David Bright Gharthey-Tagoe

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews



1987

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The Church's Understanding of Death and the Dead with
Reference to Traditional Effutu Beliefs and Practices

by

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The Church's Understanding of Death and the Dead with
Reference to the Traditional Effutu Beliefs and Practices.

Abstract

To be or not to be that is the question. The Church's Understanding of Death and the Dead with reference to the traditional Effutu people's beliefs and practices is an attempt to do theology in an African way as well as to understand the Christian Faith in terms of death and the dead.

In the pervasive influence and challenge of the Christian message to Africans, Effutus not excepted, and demand upon their individual lives and their relationships with one another; in countless personal and group decisions made, and lives actually lived very differently from what they would otherwise have been, in the new high hopes and aspirations for individual and social destiny which it has awakened; in the sheer excellence of human performance in devotion and courageous, self-sacrificing service to others, and yet in other ways, Christianity still plays a role and exerts a force in the Effutu Traditional Area in particular and Ghanaians' way of life in general. This is none the less real and significant because Christianity eludes full and conclusive analysis.

For instance, questions relating to the understanding of death; funeral rites; the relationship between the living and the dead - all have been issues of tension between African and the West. As a result there is widespread readiness today to repudiate the missionary past by

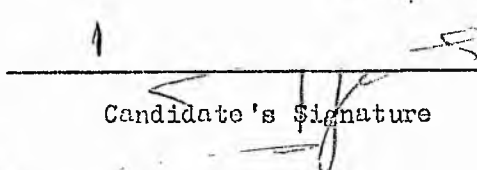
the Africans who for more than a century now, have been doing theology regarding death and the dead in a strange language, in strange thought forms, in a strange ideology.

African theology and especially that of death and the dead is at the crossroad. In some sense it finds some 'natural' affinities with Liberation Theology and historically, as far as Christ's death is concerned, could be connected with Western theology. Yet, while it may and should attempt to draw from the richness of both theologies, African theology of the dead should guard against capitulating to either of those forms.

It must be dynamic, ready to change and address itself to all situations in time and space. It should be liberating, freeing mankind from all chains, including social, racial, economic, cultural, and even confessional domination. In short, the primary concern of African theology and especially that of death and the dead must be the proclamation and 'incarnation' of the message that "Now we no longer believe because of what you told us; we have heard him ourselves and we know that he really is the Saviour of the world" (John 4/42), through his suffering and death, wrath and judgement - all working on behalf of man and his reconciliation.

DECLARATION

This is to declare that the following thesis is based on the results of research carried out by myself, is my own composition, and that it has not previously been presented for a higher degree. The research was carried out at the University of St. Andrews under the supervision of Prof. D. W. P. SHAW


Candidate's Signature

CERTIFICATE

I certify that David Bright Ghartey-Tagoe
has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution of the
University Court 1967, No. 1 (as amended) and is
qualified to submit this thesis in application for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

.....

.....

Signature of Supervisor

STATEMENT

I graduated from the Hood Theological Seminary, Livingstone College, Salisbury, North Carolina, U.S.A. in 1980 with Master of Divinity Degree, and from Yale University, Divinity School in 1981 with a Master of Sacred Theology Degree. I was admitted as a full-time research candidate for the Degree of Ph.D., under Resolution of the St. Andrews University Court, 1967, No. 1 on 19th April, 1983 with effect from 1st October, 1981.

DEDICATION.

In loving memory of my late father and mother,
Safohen Kwesi Gyete and Maame Ekua Panyin, respectively
and to my children, Nana Kwaaba and Ekua Gyetowa, who
have taught me much about gratitude and joy of being
accepted in an ebusua community and about Christian
vocation.

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ABBREVIATIONS

<u>Periodical Reference</u>		<u>Full Title</u>
Africa	-	Africa.
Afr. Affairs	-	African Affairs.
Afr. Urban Notes	-	African Urban Notes.
Anthropos	-	Anthropos.
Cath. V.	-	Catholic Voice.
Chr. Crisis	-	Christianity and Crisis.
Chr. Sch. Rev.	-	Christian Scholars Review.
Con. Thes. Mon.	-	Concordia Theological Monthly.
Cross Currents	-	Cross Currents.
de l'I FAN	-	del Institute Francis d' Afrique Noirs.
E.B.	-	Encyclopaedia Britannica.
Exp. Times	-	Expository Times.
F.T.	-	Faith and Thought.
Ghana Bull. Theo.	-	Ghana Bulletin of Theology.
Herb. J.	-	Herbert Journal.
J.A.I.	-	Journal of Anthropological Institute.
J.A.H.	-	Journal of African History.
J.A. Soc.	-	Journal of African Society.
J.Am.F.	-	Journal of American Folklore.
J.B.L.	-	Journal of Biblical Literature.
J.R.Th.	-	Journal of Religious Thought.
J.Theo.Sc.	-	Journal of Theological Science.
MAN	-	MAN.
Mod. Afr. Stud.	-	Modern African Studies.
N.C. Enc.	-	New Catholic Encyclopaedia.
N.T.I.	-	New Testament Interpretation.
N.T.S.	-	New Testament Studies.
Past. Psy.	-	Pastoral Psychology.
Pro Mundi Bull.	-	Pro Mundi Bulletin.
Rel. Stud.	-	Religious Studies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In writing this thesis, I have accumulated debts of gratitude to many people, only a few of whom I can name here.

First and foremost is the one I owe to Chiefs, elders, Tufohen and Asafohenfo of Effutu Traditional Area, both Christians and non-Christians, who gave me a profound understanding, interest, assistance and encouragement as a minister of the Word.

Secondly, I wish also to thank the Methodist Church, Ghana, as well as Methodist Church Overseas Division, London, for their sponsorship. Here I wish to record my appreciation to the Revd. Dr. J. S. A. Stephens the Ex-Secretary of Methodist Church Ghana Conference and Revd. J. K. Tekyi-Ansah, the Secretary of Conference Methodist Church Ghana, who initiated the Methodist Church Overseas Division's grant. Gratitude is also due to the Awards Committee of Senate, University of St. Andrews for offering me a research grant amounting to three-quarters of total fee commitment. I thank also the Scottish Methodist Church and especially Revd. Dr. Malcolm Rothwell for their hospitality.

I wish also to thank the Methodist Lay Men Movement, Great Britain; The World Methodist Oxford Theological Institute and the Society for the Study of Theology for their warm fellowship and enriching experience.

Above all, for the reception of the thesis' proposal within the framework of the Department of Divinity and Practical Theology, I am deeply indebted to the Council of the Faculty of Divinity, and also to Professor D. W. Shaw,

the Dean of the Faculty of Divinity, under whose gracious, patient, frankness and intelligent supervision this thesis has been carried on from beginning to end. I thank also Dr. Ladislave Holy, of Social Anthropology, University of St. Andrews, for reading a section of the thesis. I thank also Prof. Kwesi A. Dickson of Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, for reading through my manuscripts and for his suggestions.

My thanks are due also to the staff and especially to Miss Morag M. Fowler and Mr. Frazer of the University Library, St. Andrews, who gave me generously of their time and distinguished scholarship.

For typing, I thank Mr. Thomas Isgood Appiah of Placid Secretarial Academy, Oda, Ghana, who typed with unfailing care.

Finally, as I look over and beyond 6½ years of study abroad, I wish to thank my children and both Nsona and Anona ebusua of my wife and myself respectively for enduring the inconvenience of our absence.

I thank also my wife, Hannah, for her wonderful encouragement, moral and spiritual support and enduring my almost constant writing and revision.

Mention must be made again of all who have aided this work. They are not of course responsible for its shortcomings. I am.

I am however very sorry for submitting this thesis late. This is due to the unforeseen socio-economic problems I had to go through in Ghana. It would not be appropriate for me to recount all the experiences. I should therefore be very grateful if you would accept my apology in good faith.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

In May, 1955¹ the Christian Council of Ghana called a Conference on Christianity and African Culture. The Conference grew out of a speech delivered by Professor K. A. Busia, who maintained that "for conversion to the Christian Faith to be more than superficial the Christian Church must come to grips with traditional beliefs and practices, and with world-view that these beliefs and practices imply".² One sees today that the problem facing a new Ghanaian convert to the Christian faith is that the new convert is poised between two worlds: the old traditions and customs he is striving to leave behind, the new beliefs and practices to which he is still a stranger. The Church would help him better, if she understood the former while she spoke with authority about the latter.³ It should be pointed out that it is not Christianity alone which is destroying the ancient cultural pattern. 'Secularism, economic and political change', the whole drift of the present age is against traditional beliefs and communal ways.⁴ Furthermore S. G. Williamson maintained that secularism, political and economic change are impersonal influences. The Church can be criticised, can justify itself, can review its attitudes, can have a conscience. Secularism can not.

¹ Christian Council the Gold Coast Report, Christianity and African Culture; The proceedings of a Conference held at Accra, Gold Coast, May 2nd-6th 1955, under the auspices of the Christian Council, Accra, 1955, p. ii.

² Ibid. p. iii

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

"Not a little of the concern about African culture is a cry of the heart as changing conditions destroy the morality and stability our grandfathers knew".⁵ It may be that the attack on the Church as a destroyer of African culture is but a reverse appeal to the Church as the only institution which might save it.⁶ For, on analysis, it might turn out that Christianity is the only 'preservative' influence in the modern age that can come to the aid of African culture, as 1,500 years ago the Church of the West inherited and nurtured the Old Roman civilization.⁷ As a matter of fact this aspect of the question is not often enough debated, either within the Church or outside. Williamson remarks that as a man must submit to Christ to be saved, so it may be African culture must surrender to him, if it is to survive. Unfortunately, the climate of opinion today is against such surrender.⁸ Some think the ancient heritage might be revived if there was a withdrawal from alien influence. This is in any case impossible and even if it were possible it is to be doubted whether it would save a declining or disintegrating culture. "Cultures withdrawn and hedged around find their resting place in a museum".⁹ A culture must conquer or be conquered, and its strength lies in its own inner resources, in its own spiritual foundations. It may be that Christ is offering those spiritual foundations to African Culture.¹⁰

⁵ Ibid p. vi.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ W. M. Ramsay, The Church in Roman Empire, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1893, p. 81.

⁸ Christian Council of the Gold Coast, op. cit. p. v.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid p. v.

The problem again is that if this is so, has the Church perceived it? What of the Church itself? It is assumed by many that Christianity is now well established in Ghana¹¹ and that the leaven which now works will leaven the lump. If the Christianity established in Ghana is the real thing, this may well be true; and God is at work in His Church. But what is the evidence? Is the Christianity we see around us the real thing?

For one to be a Christian, (though it is much debated) is a personal decision to surrender wholly to Christ, to let Him work in him.¹² The element of decision cannot be handed down from father to son, from uncle to nephew. It is a surrender which each generation, and every one who calls himself Christian must make on his own behalf.¹³

As will be seen in Chapter one, there are in Ghana many Christian converts in all the cities, towns, urban and rural areas, as well as villages today. The traditional system of belief in a Supreme Being and pantheon of gods, in animated nature, and in ancestors is not an inhospitable one. Nevertheless, Christianity has been a source of conflict (in the Effutu Traditional Area, the area of our study in particular) and in Ghana in general.

¹¹ It is estimated that 42.8% of the population of Ghana is Christian. Furthermore, Christians are found in all walks of life, in state, in commerce, in industry etc. Indigenous religions claim 38.2% and Islam 12%, and secularism is introduced by Western education, J. S. Pobee. "Christian Responsibility In State and Society" in God's Mission in Ghana, Accra, Asempa Publishers, 1973, p. 67.

¹² F. Bottomley, Attitudes to the Body In Western Christendom, London, Lepas Books, 1979, p. 159.

¹³ cf. Matthew 11⁵

The nature of the conflict was explained as follows in an official report:

The tendency of Christian converts to alienate themselves from communities to which they belong is very marked, and is naturally resented by the chiefs who claim their hereditary right, in which they are supported by Government, to make the converts in common with their fellow tribe men obey such laws and orders as are in accordance with native custom, not being repugnant to natural justice, equity and good conscience.¹⁴

The Christian converts refuse to perform the ordinary services to their chiefs and state, on the ground that being Christians they could not take part in 'fetish observance' and that they are bound by the Church's rules and regulations.¹⁵

In 1912 a committee consisting of the Governor of the then Gold Coast, the chief commissioner, three other officials, and representatives of the missions, i.e. Wesleyan (now Methodist), Basel (now Presbyterian) and Roman Catholic, attempted to resolve the conflict by ruling that: "No Christian shall be called upon to perform any ... rites or service, but shall be bound to render customary service to his chief on ceremonial occasions when no element of fetish practice is involved".¹⁶ The committee further suggested that an effort should be made to draw a distinction between fetish and purely ceremonial service.

¹⁴ K. A. Busia, "The Ashanti" in African Worlds, London. Oxford University Press, 1954, p. 207.

¹⁵ cf. Kwesi A. Dickson, "The Methodist Witness and African Situation" in Sanctification and Liberation ed. Theodore Runyon, Abington; Nashville, 1980, p. 196.

¹⁶ Busia op. cit. p. 207.

The value of these injunctions may be seen from the account of the traditional Effutu world-view to be discussed in Chapter One. The ceremonial occasions when the services of the Christian converts were required could not be purely ceremonial. The convert might indeed be required to do ~~one~~^{no} more than carry a chair or an umbrella or beat a drum,¹⁷ but the occasion might be the celebration of funeral rites for the dead in the clan when the people express their sense of dependence on the ancestors, and pray to them for food, health, children and prosperity.

Again an Effutu Christian feels obliged to identify himself with the deceased by singing his favourite hymns and recalling his characteristic sayings and actions.¹⁸ The Church's injunction against drumming and dancing, and music has created a problem. In fact, though Christianity has won many converts in Ghana and particularly in the Effutu Traditional Area these fundamental conflicts remain. The ceremonialism connected with ancestral reverence has made it a resilient force which Christianity has not been able to wipe out.

Many Effutu Christians join in Deer Hunting Festival and Akomase¹⁹ celebrations with their fellow countrymen and share the sentiments that the ceremonials keep alive; a sense of tribal unity and continuity and a sense of dependence on the ancestors.

¹⁷ Ibid p. 208.

¹⁸ cf. Christian Council of the Gold Coast Report, op. cit. pp. 68-69.

¹⁹ The Effutu people are known for their festivals. They have two festivals - the deer hunting festival which takes place on the first Saturday of every May, and the Akomase festival. This is a festival for remembering their dead. This takes place in August. It involves many activities - firing of guns, ~~drumming~~^{drumming}, wailing etc.

It is a commonplace to describe Christianity in Effutu as a thin veneer. The description is not inaccurate or superficial if it means that the people have not taken over the concept of the universe and the nature of man within which christianity finds its fullest meaning. The Effutu Christian most probably still accepts the view of the universe and of man which has dominated Effutu thought for generations. It is part of his cultural heritage, and he has taken it on as he has done other aspects of his culture without much difficulty and without subjecting it to critical analysis. To most Effutu people the world is ruled from afar by a Supreme Being who is all-wise, all powerful, the Creator of all things; below him are lesser spirits, born of the Supreme Being, God, but closer to man; nearest of all are ancestors of whom he is reminded daily by speech and action.²⁰

The Effutu concept of the constitution of man has not changed; the observance of matrilineal descent, the definition of a man's status and role, and his political and legal rights and obligation, though his membership of his mother's lineage also makes him a member of a wider group, her clan. The father's moral responsibility for the child and the part he is customarily expected to play in his marriage justify the myth - that it is the father's "sunsum" that gives his son his personality, while the Okra, soul is given by God.²¹

On the social level and in certain details of conduct, Christianity is influencing Effutu society: but in matters like death and funeral rites where questions of the interpretation of

²⁰ cf. C. G. Baeta (ed.) Christianity in Tropical Africa, London, Oxford University Press, 1968, pp. 141-2.

²¹ See also P. K. Sarpong, "The Ghanaian and Death" in Catholic Voice, V. 45, No 11, Cape Coast, 1970 p. 162.

the universe are implicit, the influence of Christianity is slight; for the Effutu like Akan to a large extent still retain their own interpretation of the universe and the nature of man and of society and death and the dead; and the difference between this and the European interpretation of the same phenomena constitutes the fundamental conflict between Effutu and European ways of life.

Given the above underlying problem, the aim of this study is therefore to consider the attitudes and practices of Christians in Effutu Traditional Area concerning death and the dead, the extent to which this has been influenced by a particular understanding - on the part of the Church - of traditional cultural values and the possibility of a language of Christian faith which solves the problem of conflicting theological views regarding traditional beliefs and practices.

Furthermore, the intention of this project is to draw attention to the fact that the process needs to be accelerated if African Christianity is to escape being a fossilized form of nineteenth-century European²² and that theological reflection on the particular issue of death and the dead would help to correlate theology and ministry and to encourage the taking of responsibility of doing theology, in a traditional situation come of age.

Here it should be acknowledged that a great deal of work has been done on 'African Theology' but little or nothing on the specific problems concerning death and the dead. Hence this study.

²² Kofi Appiah-Kubi and Serio Torres, (eds.) African Theology en route, New York: Orbis Books, 1979, p. 110.

With such a project, the writer's principle interest is in the attitude of the Methodist Church in Ghana, not of course precluding reference to other Protestant Churches. The reasons for such an interest in the Methodist Church, Ghana are (a) that in many respects Methodist Church, Ghana is typical of the Protestant Church in its attitude to traditional beliefs and practices, and (b) that the writer is a Methodist Minister, and is therefore very familiar with the Church which could therefore serve as a case study. Again with such a project, we are bound to limit our scope to one specific geographical area in Akan society, i.e., the Effutu Traditional Area in the Central Region of Ghana. The reason for setting such a limit is that the writer is an Effutu/Akan who before his call to the Methodist ministry was a captain²³ of an Asafo Company. He is therefore able to give first hand account as well as provide the necessary details.

²³ Unlike other Akan Societies which have seven asafo companies, the Effutu people have only two companies i.e. Tuafo, the vanguard and Dentsifo, the centre. Each asafo company is subdivided into seven groups. With the exception of Asomfo and Apegyafo groups which are known in Dentsifo and Tuafo companies respectively the following groups are found in all the two companies. (1) Kyiremfo (2) Etsibafo (3) Petufo (4) Petufo asam (5) Nsenabi (6) Akonfora Asam. And each group has captains or a captain, (Safohen) who could be equated with a captain in the Army. This captain organises and maintains law and order in the asafo company. When it is Deer Hunting Festival it is he who leads his group to the bush for the hunt. In any celebration he is the sole person in control of the group. He however takes his instructions from the Supi. The word supi means - a pot brimful of water, and water is essential to life. So is the supi essential to the life of the asafo company. The supi takes orders from Tufohene; and transmits them to asafohenfo (captains) of each company. Tufohene of the asafo is the overall leader and represents the commoners on the council of the chief and his elders. In time of war, it was he who acted as the commanding officer. In the absence of war he still maintains the leadership function, thus during ritual year, i.e. the Deer Hunting Festival and Akomasi, Tufohene is the first politico - religious leader to pour libation meant for the stability of the Effutu Traditional Area; just as he would have done in times of war to defend the area or community. For an interesting examination of this subject in the wider Ghanaian context see J. C. de Graft Johnson, "The Fanti Asafo" in Africa V. 3 (July, 1932); J. B. Christensen, Double Descent Among the Fanti, (New Haven, 1954). To this may be added Ansu K. Datta and R. Porter, "The Asafo

Notwithstanding the strength of Christianity, traditional beliefs and practices survive generally in Ghana and in particular in the Effutu Traditional Area. The questions that one needs to ask are: How does a Ghanaian Christian, and in particular an Effutu Christian relate the Bible and Christian traditional teaching to his indigenous religious beliefs and practices regarding death and the dead? To what extent has the adoption of Western Christian religion change the original beliefs and practices? How best can the Church cope with indigenous beliefs and practices concerning the dead in terms of Christian faith, in such a way as to avoid the impression that Christianity is an essentially Western affair?

Here again, primary fact finding will be one of our major goals. The objective is that of assembling and utilizing all available facts in a critical analysis with theological implications. During the writer's field work in 1981 and 1983 and also in 1985 in Ghana the style and principal techniques were those of participation, unstructured interviews, observation and conversation. Further mention should be made of the writer's field work in 1980 at the Sandy Ridge African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Landis, North Carolina and in 1981 at the Bethany African Methodist Episcopal Church, New Haven, Connecticut, U.S.A.

The writer also attended some Black churches and selected white churches in Britain. The exposure to beliefs and practices concerning death and the dead in United States of America and in British Funeral Homes, and the co-operation of bereaved families in their readiness for interviews made it possible to put into

²³ (cont'd) System in Historical Perspective" in Journal of African History, XII, 2 (1971).

right perspective the beliefs and practices regarding death and the dead and the resultant problem for the Church in the Effutu Traditional Area and that of the beliefs and practices of the West. With this experience the writer has had the opportunity to be able to know for himself the problems existing for the Church in connection with the people's beliefs and practices of the dead. Participation, interviews and observation of both traditional and Christian funerals have provided the possibility of assessing the quality of the field data assembled.

Such a project demands a specific structural perspective as well as an inter-disciplinary approach. The first chapter deals with the environmental, historical and socio-religious background as well as the anthropological setting of the Effutu Traditional Area in relation to the Akan and Ghanaian Society and to the Christian religion. Chapter II deals with death in the traditional Effutu and Christian understanding. Chapter III concerns the survival of the body after death. Here we shall see the traditional Effutu and the (contemporary) Christian concept of the body after death. In Chapter IV we consider the criticisms of the people's ceremonial rites emanating from the attitudes of the funeral organisers and the underlying belief relative to life and life after death. The continuing concern for the departed is discussed and dealt with in Chapter V. Chapter VI is the conclusion. Here an attempt is made to assess constructively the value for Christian theology of Effutu-African religious beliefs and practices concerning death and the dead and points in the direction of further research.

Without doubt, in an exploratory study such as this there are bound to be shortcomings which are easily recognised. These result from lack of coherence in non-literate concepts and this incoherency can lead to surprising reactions when more detailed information is sought about a specific belief

or practice. It is therefore a commonplace that such further questionings are either evaded, dodged or the conversations diverted which makes answers and facts obtained vague and difficult to analyse.

Finally, it should be emphasised here that the ~~in~~ identification of Western culture with Christianity has been partly responsible for the unfortunate contradictions in the mission and the ministry of the churches in Africa and particularly in the Effutu Traditional Area. It, therefore becomes imperative for a radical separation to be made of Christianity from Western culture to free the universal message of the Gospel - God's love for humanity in Jesus the Christ. By this the message could be adaptable to and acceptable in all and varied cultural situations, and also to determine in the process where the Effutu people want to go in terms of Christian evangelism and witness to the continent in the last quarter of the twentieth century. If the Christian Church in Africa is to serve faithfully its vocation then it has to come face to face with this issue of crisis of identity of culture and Christianity.

African Christians believe that African theology must be understood in the context of African life and culture²⁴ and the creative attempt of African peoples to shape a new future that is different from the colonial past and the neo-colonial present. The African situation requires a new theological methodology that is different from the approaches of the dominant theologies of

²⁴ See also R. E. S. Tanner, Transition in African Beliefs: Traditional Religion and Christian Change, A Study in Sukumaland, Tanzania, New York, 1967, p. 91.

the West. "African theology must reject, therefore, the prefabricated ideas of North Atlantic theology by defining itself according to the struggles of the people in their resistance against the structures of domination. Our task as theologians is to create a theology that arises from and is accountable to African people".²⁵ The Effutu traditional beliefs and practices and the resultant problem for the church point to a conflict of cultures - the Western culture of the early missionaries informing later missionary attitudes with the traditional African culture being held in contempt by Western missionaries under the guise of Christianity. It becomes a theological problem when theological and philosophical reasonings are sought to justify the churches' attitudes. A living Christian faith in African cannot but interact with African culture. In fact there is being developed an interpretation of Christianity and specifically of Christian theology that one may describe as African.²⁶

²⁵ Kofi Appiah-Kubi and Sergio Torres op. cit. p. 193.

²⁶ Ibid p. 110.

CHAPTER I

AN ACCOUNT OF THE EFFUTU TRADITIONAL AREA AND ITS PLACE WITHIN A WIDER GHANAIAN AND AKAN SOCIETY

The reason why such an account is necessary is that the population of Ghana is about 12 million and the actual rate of growth at approximately 2.7 per cent, with the larger urban centres growing at twice or three times this rate.¹ There are about 75 ethnic groups. Surely there would be insufficient time for a definite study of Ghanaian culture as a whole and, in any case, it would be impossible for one person to produce a complete account of such a varied population. Hence the writer was presented with a difficult problem: either to base the study on a specific geographical area of the Akan society to which he belongs and which he has examined in detail and reached conclusions, or to try to give a widely based but very little documented account of Ghanaian society in general. In fact the writer has tried to steer the former course. Hence the account of the Effutu Traditional Area and its place within a wider Ghanaian and Akan society.

Ethnic Groups: Ghanaian society is pluralistic in the sense that the population is composed of numerous tribes, clans, ethnics and linguistic communal groups each with a sense of their own corporate identity and a degree of cultural distinctiveness.² Considering, in fact, the groups historically associated with the country, it can be seen that ethnically the people of Ghana

¹ Refer 1970 Population Census of Ghana VII: Statistical of Localities and Enumeration Areas: Census Office, Accra. 1972, p. ii.

² David Brown "Who are the Tribalists: Social Pluralism and Political Ideology in Ghana" African Affairs, LXXXI, 322, 1982.

may be said to belong to one broad group within the negro family though there is a large variety of tribal or sub-ethnic units. On the basis of language and culture at least seven broad ethnic groupings, each containing several sub-tribe communities, have conventionally been identified. However, those in Southern Ghana and Ashanti-Brong Ahafo, nearly all of whom belong to the 'Kwa' linguistic group³ - can be divided into four groups, namely the Akan Group including those speaking the Twi-Fanti, Anyi-Baulo, and Guan dialects; the Ga-Adangbe Group; the Ewe Group including the Ewe people only; and the Central Togo Group, of which the Togo remnant languages group forms a part.⁴ Fortunately for Ghana, notwithstanding her various groups, no serious divisions or animosities have asserted themselves since the country became independent in 1957, though tribal consciousness still persists in many quarters. It is this tribal consciousness which has been one of the problems that has always faced the expansion of the Christian Church. How could christianity be adapted to meet the needs of different groups? However, at all levels in government and in public life, a conscious effort is made to play down tribal differences, a method that has been helped in no small measure by the adoption of English, the language used by early Christian missionaries and colonial administrators.

³ D. Westermann & M.A. Bryan, The Languages of West Africa, Oxford University Press, 1952, pp. 76-94.

⁴ These categories are those given in 1960 census, which is the latest one to give full data on ethnic origins. Refer E. Gil, A. Aryee and D.K. Ghansah, Special Report 'E' Tribes in Ghana, Census Office, Accra, Ghana 1964 p. ix.

The word 'Akan' appears to have been derived from A'k pan, which is a synonym of A'Gban (or A'Gbon), A'Gwan and A'Guan and other forms of the same word. The 'Akan' from Kumbu, using their own dialect, called themselves A'Kpan which became Akan; the 'Akan' people who settled in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast before the eleventh century⁵ called themselves A'Gban or A'Gbon from which the modern name Gonja (Gbon-Dja or Die-io, Gbon from Dja) is derived. The forms A'Gwan or A'Gwon and A'Guan appear in the Akan clan names - Anoma (A'Gwan-na) or Agona (A'Guon-na), Agona which is also derived from A'Gwon-na and Aguana (E'Guan-na).⁶ Although the words 'Akan' and 'Aguan' were originally identical, the so-called Aguan or Guan people in the Gold Coast do not regard themselves as Akan, nor are they so regarded by those who call themselves Akan. The Gonja, however, those descended from the ancient Guan-Dja as the Effutu people - (the subject of this study) regard them as their brothers,⁷ and also known as Akan. Whereas the various Guan tribes are patrilineal (i.e. tracing descent from the male line) the ancient Guan-Dja (not the modern Gonja) and all those termed Akan, are matrilineal (i.e. tracing descent from the female line). They are in fact Guan, as their name shows.

⁵ Medeline Monoukian, Akan and Ga-Adangbe Peoples of the Gold Coast. London, Oxford University Press, 1950, p. 13.

⁶ "'A' or 'E' is the plural prefix and 'na' in each case means descendants of. "Meyerowitz E.L.R. The Sacred State of the Akan, London, ~~Faber~~ & ~~Faber~~ 1951, p. 22.

⁷ Ibid.

With reference to migration there is a great deal of conflicting detailed documentary material which makes it difficult to construct a cogent and precise migration theory for the Akan of which the Effutu people are a part. For instance, pre-1925 historians, like W.T. Balmer who based his hypothesis on the study of local traditions maintained that the ancient kingdom of Ghana and the present Akan people of Ghana were related. This hypothesis is supported by J.B. Danquah and E.L.R. Meyerowitz. Yet there are some scholars like J.R. Goody who question the authenticity of the method used by these scholars to support their hypothesis.⁸

Allowing for all the conflicting views about the migration theory of the Akan and considering the Akan in modern Ghana, the Akan-speaking peoples occupy most of the southern half of Ghana including the Effutu Traditional Area. From a linguistics point of view, the Akan are distinguished into three languages and each of these is in turn subdivided into dialect groups or individual tribes, which in the descending order of size are: Ashanti, Fante-Agona, Barom(Brong), Akyom, Akuapom, Kwamu(Kwahu), Wasa, Nsoma-Evaluo, Ahanta, Sefwi(Schwi).⁹

⁸ On the two schools of thoughts see W.T. Balmer, A History of the Akan peoples of the Gold Coast, London 1925; J.B. Danquah 'The Culture of the Akan' Africa, xxii, 1952, pp.360-366; E.L.R. Meyerowitz, op.cit. p.51; Akan Traditions of Origin, London, 1952; The Akan of Ghana: Their ancient beliefs, London, 1958; The Early History of the Akan States of Ghana, London, 1974; and on the other hand, J.R. Goody, 'Ethno history and the Akan of Ghana' Africa xxix, 1959 pp.67-81; 'The Myth of a State', Modern African Studies, vi, 1968, pp.461-473. Furthermore, for this hypothesis on group or family or clan migration instead of mass migration of the Akan ethnic groups, see especially J.R. Goody, 'Ethno history and the Akan of Ghana' Africa xxix, pp.461-473.

⁹ B. Gil, A.F. Aryee, D.K. Ghansah, 1960 population Census Ghana: Special Report "The Tribes in Ghana" Accra, 1964, p. xvi.

Tradition has it that the Fante, Ashanti and Wasa and in fact all the Akan-speaking peoples were originally one tribe, a pastoral population inhabiting an open country beyond the forest belt and further north than Salaga (Northern Region). As a result of pressure from Fulani and other Northern Tribes, they began to migrate in small parties into the forest. This gradual migration went on for several years until eventually, having populated the forest belt, they began moving down to the coast. This was believed to have taken place in the 15th century.¹⁰

While the large aggregate of tribes that comprise the Akan peoples exhibit a high degree of cultural homogeneity, there are some variations in culture, which sufficiently differentiate them from one another. These might have been formed during the last few centuries in their history as separate 'States' or Traditional Areas. Unlike the Ashanti¹¹ and Akyem 'States' or 'Traditional Areas'; the Fante live in the south western part of Ghana along the coast and are bordered on the east by the Awutu¹² and on the west by the Ahanta.

Effutu

The Effutu Traditional Area is one of the Fante lands founded along the coast. The land of the Effutu was believed to have originally belonged to the people of 'Apa'.

¹⁰ Gil et al. op. cit. p. XVI - XVII.

¹¹ In stressing the Akan on the Coast during this time there is the need to mention the Akan inland; the more important was the Ashante and their influence. This was a great factor on the coast before and after the British administration of the Gold Coast. Gold played a great role in their social, political and economic life. For instance alluvial surface gold has been mined as far back as oral tradition goes, and its dust was for a long time their currency and the medium of skilled craftsmen. Again their religious and priestly leader Okomfo Anokye 'brought down' the famous Golden Stool from heavens, representing their 'ark of covenant', the home of the 'soul' of the Ashanti people. As a result of which a stool has become a characteristic symbol of the Akan people. For further reading see Edwin W. Smith, The Golden Stool, London, 1927; A.A.Y. Kyerematen, Panoply of Ghana, London, 1964, see especially pp.11-26.

Under the leadership of Osim Pam, as popular tradition goes, the Effutu from Amanforo-Ogua (Cape Coast), descendants of Guan and Mo (Grunsi-speaking people) who came from Bono-Mansu, sometime capital of the Bono Kingdom,¹³ and sacked the people of Apan and established themselves in the district in ca. A.D.

1530.¹⁴ The Effutu Traditional Area is situated forty miles west of Accra (the capital of Ghana), and fifty miles east of Cape Coast, and is in the Central Region of Ghana. The Effutu Traditional Area comprises Sankor, Ateitu, Nsuekyir, Gyahadzo, Osumanpanyin, Gyangyanadzo, Ansaful and Simpa.* Simpa is named after the leader Osimpam or Tumpa and is popularly known as Winneba - the capital town and seat of the Paramount chief.

12

The Awutu people are Guan in origin. Their language is very similar to that of Effutu though culturally different. Gil et al op.cit. p. xxii. The Fante are the second largest (far out-numbered by their traditional rivals, the Ashantis) of the fifteen or more sub-groups into which the Akan-speaking peoples of Ghana are classified. The Fante inhabit the South-central region of Ghana. I. Chukwukere, 'Agnetic and Uterine Relation among the Fante: Male/Female Dualism' Africa LII, No. 1, 1982, p. 67.

13

This information was obtained from oral historians like Supi Odonsu, Oso Kow Dantse and Onipa Kwoku Bondzi during field work in March 1985.

14

Ibid.

*

See Appendix A for the map of Effutu.

Winnoba, the capital, has the following divisional areas with their divisional chiefs, by order of rank.

1. Penkye - this area has the first divisional chief known as Nenyi Gyankuma who is also the Odontenhon.
2. Alata Kyenkyonso - this area has the second divisional chief by the name Nenyi Tokyi who is also the Anifahon.
3. Eyipo - this has Nenyi Gyan who is also the Benkumhon.
4. Penkookyir - this area has Nenyi Annobil who is also the Twafohon. The first two represent Dentsefo Asafo company whilst the last two represent the Twafo Asafo Company. Apart from the four divisional areas in the capital, there is also Kyedomhon at Nsuekyir*.

Although the Effutu appear to differ from other Akan tribes, especially in the distinctive Guan dialect they speak which is quite unlike the language of the Akan (Fante or Twi) yet they share many social and political institutions with the Akan tribes.

* This was obtained from Nana Ayirobi Acquah IV, the Paramount Chief of the Effutu. This was during fieldwork on 30th August, 1985. For more discussion on the Effutu chieftancy affairs, refer Notes of Evidence taken at commission of Enquiry into the constitution of Effutu by Francis Crawthor, Secretary for Native Affairs, 1913, Ghana National Archives, Accra Adm.1600; To this may be added Notes of Evidence taken at commission of Enquiry into the Winnoba Stool dispute by J.T. Furley, Secretary for Native Affairs, 1919, Ghana National Archives, Accra Adm. 1680; Gazette No.22 1931; Provisional National Defence Council Law 105, March 22, 1985.

They use Fanto more often as a means of communication in their daily business and other activities including the songs of the Asafo companies¹⁵ which organisations are essentially Akan.

15

'Asafo' literally means 'war-people'. This is derived from *osa* = war and *fo* = people; This term is used in Akan language to cover any organised body of people under joint leadership. For instance, 'Kristo Asafo' means a community under the leadership of Christ. In Effutu Traditional area traditional asafo organisation as in other Akan societies must be seen as an answer to the need for a regularised military system during centuries characterised by frequent wars and migration. Refer Matthew Nathan, 'The Gold Coast under the Danes and Dutch at the end of the 17th century'. African Affairs, iv. 1904, p. 29; especially paragraph 6. At the present time, the Effutu Asafo system as among other Akan has developed into a permanent commoner organisation with its own officers for the regulation of its own affairs. Besides social and cultural activities, the part played by Asafo system is stimulating leisure and recreational activities. The asafo is the most important social frame work for most communal labour, such as sweeping and cleaning the streets, constructing public toilets and digging trenches and culverts in towns. Rescue work as putting off outbreak of fire. The evidence of this was when on 19th August 1955 the Ebenezer Methodist Church, Winneba building was in flames. Rescue work such as digging out of mud remains of a house that has collapsed, to find out bodies of survivors, or organising search parties to trace a lost member of the town, form part of the social responsibilities of the asafo. Here it is worth mentioning that opposition to participation in asafo activities has come from time to time from Christian churches in Effutu traditional area and indeed in Ghana as a whole, because of its past activities as a warrior organisation and its part played during the Deer Hunting Festival and Akomasi. But its usefulness as a politico-religious or social organisation has not disappeared in the absence of ethnic war. Unlike other Akan societies, it is the responsibility of the Effutu asafo to elect and install the Omanhon of the Effutu state. cf. H.S. Nowland's comment 30/3-32 on the Degraft Johnson's Report in Administration 11/14, 39, Ghana National Archives. Comment from provisional commissioner on this report gives a good indication of regional and local variation in the asafo system. See also J.M. Sarbah, Fante National Constitution 2nd edition, London, 1968. To this may be added Christensen, Double Descent among the Fanti, New Haven, Human Relations file, 1954. In fact for a comprehensive study and re-examination of the Fanti Asafo, see J.C. Degraft Johnson, 'The Fante Asafo' Africa V, 1932 pp. 307-322.

The Effutu dialect is somewhat peculiar and unintelligible to many people, including neighbouring Akan-Ghanaian people.

The word Effutu is popularly derived from 'futu'¹⁶ meaning 'mix'. The prefix 'e' makes 'efutu' mean 'having been mixed' which in the real sense means 'mixture of languages' - For instance, a word like 'nsunsi' is from Fante 'Nsu' (water) and Guan dialect 'nsi' (back). So 'nsunsi' literally means back of the water which is a name for one of the towns in the State. Again the word 'Aboabi' is from Fante 'aboa' (animal) and Guan 'bi' (the one) meaning an animal.

Winnoba used to have a fine port, which had been built by the British in 1800. The city possessed a number of advantages in site and location. The bay on which the port stood was calm and safe for navigation, and the port was the terminus of a short route to the rich gold district of Akim. Also being a very breezy spot Winnoba was regarded as one of the healthiest towns on the coast.¹⁷

¹⁵ (contd.) and Ansu Datta, 'The Fante Asafo: A re-examination', Africa XXXXII, 1972, pp.305-315. It is interesting to note that modern asafo symbols reflect European presence on the coast and their Christian influence. For example, see the asafo pusuban(shrine) at Apam, Manfam. For comprehensive study of the officers and their duties in the asafo companies in Akan societies see Samuel Asanto Antwi, A Study in the Transformation and Continuity of Akan Religious Ritual and Ceremony in Gomoa, Central Ghana, Ph.D. thesis, University of Aberdeen, 1980 especially pages 57-64.

¹⁶ This was obtained in 1985 from Supi Odonsu, one of the oral historians, Nana Akwando V, the Tufuhon of the Effutu Traditional Area and also by Nana Ayirebi Acquah IV, the Gnanhono of the Effutu Traditional Area.

¹⁷ The loss of trade at Winnoba after 1810 was due not to a change in physical or economic factors but to the unpopularity of the city's inhabitants with the British. K.B. Dickson, A historical geography of Ghana, London, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1969, p. 139. In February 1812 the people of Winnoba seized their commandant, Mr. Morodith, and carried him into the bush, where they maltreated him in a shocking manner, causing him to walk uncovered in the heat of the sun over burning grass and shrubs. He died from the effect of their barbarous cruelty, and the Governor of Cape Coast, assisted by a man-of-war destroyed the city and abandoned and blew up the fort. Brodie Cruickshank, Eighteen Years on the Gold Coast of Africa, Vol.1, London, Hurst and Blackett Publishers, 1853, p. 100.

Community Life:

Basically, the Effutu people living in the coast like Simpa, and Sankor are fishermen, whilst the other living inland are cultivators of land, planting vegetables, such as cassave, corn or maize, plantain, yam, tomatoes, garden eggs, okro and sugar cane.* Metal working and wood carving form a supplementary part of their basic livelihood.

Land:

In such an agricultural community, land is a subject of wide interest and some light must be thrown on it.

There is no such thing as ownerless land in Effutu area or as far as the writer knows in any Akan society. Any land not specifically owned by an ebusua, would certainly belong to the chief or the stool. The three types of land used for both building or farming could be classified as follows:

17 (Contd.) The people of Effutu still swear by 'simpa wukuuda' (Wednesday). This was because the attack by the British happened on Wednesday. It is a strong oath with high penalties for perjury. R. F. Burton, Wanderings In West Africa, Vol. II, London, Tinsley Brothers, 1863, p. 61. For many years afterwards, English vessels passing 'Winneba were in the habit of pouring a broadside into the town to inspire the natives with an idea of severe vengeance which would be exacted for spilling of European blood'. Cruickshant, op. cit. p. 100-101.

* For classification of farming system in rural areas in Ghana see George Benneh, 'Small scale farming system in Ghana' Africa XLIII, 1973, pp. 134-146. In the Effutu traditional area, there is no cocoa farming. But it is worth to note that the Basel Mission began to introduce cash crops for its Christian villages, by 1843, including cocoa. But in the next two decades, its efforts appeared to have had slight success. See Max Preiswerk, Documentary evidence of the Pioneer work for cultivation of cocoa in Ghana carried out by the Basel Mission at Akropong Agricultural station 1857-1868, Accra, 1957. However crucial innovation were made by some local people in 1879, notably Tetteh Quarshie. Refer Polhy Hill, Migrant Cocoa Farmers of Southern Ghana, London, 1963, pp. 161-172.

Stool Land:*

(a) Every piece of land in a Effutu town appears to have originally been stool land, acquired by right of conquest and occupation. It is therefore communal land as possessed by the whole town. Members of the town are allowed to take up and cultivate any unoccupied piece of land, except a grove or shrine, with the previous consent of the chief or head of the family and elders.

(b) Ebusua or family land, is owned by a particular family or ebusua acquired probably as a reward for some signal services as in time of war or through marriage.

As in the case of stool land, family land in Effutu as in other Akan groups is held in common by all the descendants of the original owner, or owners to whom the grant had been made and the ebusuapanyin acted as the trustee.

(c) Private land or private ownership of land, not inherited, but acquired by purchase is recognised in Effutu traditional area alongside the above two systems of land ownership. Private land can be bequeathed by will at the discretion of the testator. Should, however, the owner of such land die intestate, then the ownership would descend through matrilineage. Landed property thus inherited, however, carries with it certain obligations as to the support of the poorer members of the ebusua, and in point of fact, the tendency is for private land to become ebusua or family land after death of the original acquirer or purchaser.

* For Effutu land dispute see Notes of Evidence on Effutu and Ajumako Crisis by J. J. Furley, Secretary for Native Affairs, 1922, Ghana National Archives, Accra Adm., 1691. See also Lands Department, Gold Coast Land Tenure in Customary Law, Accra, 6 Volumes, 1955-1957.

Housing:

The housing situation in Effutu area is most unsatisfactory, both in quality and quantity. Especially at Nsuekyir, Ateitu, Osumanpanyin, Kwenue and Sankor. The underlying factors are, according to what the writer thinks, both population growth and economic as well as social under-development which are general phenomena in rural area in Ghana. It is only in Winneba, the capital that there is housing policy in terms of social and spatial needs in which the role of the town authorities is decisive both in the preparation and implementation of the policy. With the rest of the traditional area it is the individual farmer who decides where to put up a house, and engages ~~in~~ ^{the} services of local builders who use in most cases, mud without any concrete whatsoever in erecting the walls. Of the houses in the towns in this area it could be noticed that only the chiefs' houses, the mission houses or manse and a few individual houses recently built are built with cement blocks. There are no proper toilet facilities nor electricity except Winneba. Unlike Winneba it was in 1970 that the rest in the Effutu traditional area with a population of about 26,000* were supplied with pipe borne water by the central government.

* There are no official population statistics available for Effutu Traditional Council. The area is incorporated into the Gomaa-Awutu-Effutu District Council for census and other development purposes. The population of Winneba alone is said to be about 25,000. All told the population figure for Effutu Traditional Area is about 51,000. This figure however represents roughly half the adult population, that is 21 years and above who registered for March, 1978 Referendum. See West Africa, April, 1978, p. 765f.

In the Effutu Traditional Area one could describe it as a territory where the eternally, poor live especially in the rural areas. The homes of the people are simple houses, made up of a series of rooms built round a courtyard or compound. A couple and about four children could be seen sharing one single room of about twelve by nine feet. Most people sleep on mats on the floor. There is little furniture in the rooms; usually a table and a chair or stool. Cooking and household work in general are done in the compound, the rooms used only for sleeping, or in illness or at times when privacy is essential. Cooking is done in locally made aluminium pans; others use locally made mud-pots of simple design.

Education:

In each Effutu town just as in any other Akan town or village, the old order of things with the kind of upbringing of children still exists, though the western form of education has filtered through. The conscious or unconscious treatment or training of children in an Akan society so far as the writer knows, is to produce a type of man or woman whom anyone would be proud to call a friend; brave, without knowing or thinking they are brave; patient, without a thought that they possessed Job's virtue.

Besides the fact that the Effutu people's own peculiar religious beliefs, especially about death and the dead and their reverence for the ancestral spirits and heroes, goes a long way towards the moulding of the character and mind of the Effutu or the Akan child, other aspects of conscious or unconscious social phenomena have quite a tremendous influence in the training of children.

Some of such principles are proverbial sayings, folklore in which children are the main characters, and real life teachings which exemplify some of the basic behaviour of human beings.

In the Effutu Traditional Area, each town or village has either a council school or mission school or both. For instance in the capital, there are Anglican, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, A.M.E. Zion and Methodist Schools, in addition to Local Council schools. Apart from these elementary and primary schools, there is a number of secondary schools as well as Specialist Training College and Advanced Teacher Training College. There is also the National Academy of Music Institution. It is a common saying about Winneba that 'Winneba is a town of peace and comfort where co-education could easily be developed'.

The Traditional Effutu World-View:

Common to all the Akan tribes are the abusua, the matrilineal lineages and the basic fact about the individual's kinship is his membership of the abusua - his descent from the mother's family.¹⁸ This lineage is the basis of the individual's social security and status, his title of office and right to family¹⁹ property.

¹⁸ This is in contrast to other ethnic groups in Ghana. For instance among the Ga, Ewe and Akwapim people, there is great emphasis on patrilineal ties rather than the matrilineal system of other Akan-speaking groups, such as Effutu, Akyem, Ashanti, Kwahu, Gomoa, Agona, etc. For a fuller account of such patrilineal ties see Marion Kilson, African Urban Kinship, The Ga of Central Accra, London, 1974. See also Jack Goody, Comparative Studies in Kinship, London, 1969.

¹⁹ There are considerable difficulties in the minds of Europeans in the use of the word "family" to discuss Akan and for that matter Effutu social institutions. The use of the word family or Ebusua in this thesis, is not only for the limited immediate relatives, but also to show all persons who claim their descent from different female ancestresses who do not appear to have been in any way connected with one another.

Ideally the obusua traces its lineage to a common ancestress. In practice this meant that for any particular person, his mother, and any of her brothers and sisters, her children and her daughters' children are all his obusua. This is the context in which the Effutu people like any Akan, learn to say 'I am because I participate'. In this lineage his father to whom he is linked by the Asafo tie has no place. The father belongs to his own obusua. The obusua, is ideally comprised of all its members, the living and the dead, and the spirit ancestors, who continue their interest in its welfare and can support or forward its undertakings as well as punish defaulters or delinquents.

All told, the obusua, as the individual knows it, is the group into which he is born, within which his life develops, and by which he is buried. The obusua cares for him and trains him in childhood, though in the case of a boy this training is the concern of his father. The obusua arranges his marriage; it espouses his cause when he needs help; it supports him in old age. In fact, the obusua is an individual's strength and security, his bulwark against the buffetings of life. In response to these immense benefits there are corresponding obligations. He who receives all from the obusua, must give all to it. In this connection Westermann's description of African family life and its benefits and results may well supplement what has been said above, for it is relevant in the Effutu State in particular and in Akan in general. Westermann says:

"As the education of the individual concentrates on the preparation for life within the community in the same way this communal life has been the most important educative factor ... the individual learns willingly to conform to the group and serve it; he submits to its authority because only in this way can the community live ... He becomes a social outcast if his actions always run counter to the community's idea of right conduct".²⁰

Although the descent of obusua is matrilineal among the Effutu, the head in whom is vested political and legal authority is a male and is known as Ebusua-Panyin. There is, however, a female head known as Obaa-homan who has high moral authority and assists the Ebusua-Panyin. The Ebusua-Panyin is chosen from all male lineage members by a meeting of the whole obusua. (Nowadays there is a tendency to choose a youngish man, if possible, an educated one).²¹ He may be recommended by his predecessor but this must be confirmed by the majority of the obusua who are under no obligation to elect him.

The duties of administering the obusua fall on the Ebusua-Panyin who is the custodian of the ancestral stools²² dedicated to previous lineage heads. His many duties include arbitration or settling of disputes between members of the obusua.

²⁰ D. Westermann, Africa and Christianity Oxford, 1949, p. 70.

²¹ During the writer's field work in 1983, he had the privilege of witnessing the installation of one Kobina Taylor, as the obusua-panyin of Nsona obusua of Winnoba. Mr. Taylor was educated at the Methodist school, Winnoba and Accra Academy Secondary School. He is one of the Directors of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation. He is in his thirties.

²² For a comprehensive study of stools in Ghana see Alfred K. Quaquoo, Akan Stool and their social context, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1971. To this may be added Peter K. Sarpong, The Sacred Stools of the Akan, Accra, Tema, 1971.

officiating at funeral ceremonies, receiving and taking care of visiting members of a similar clan and generally making himself available as a consultant on the day-to-day affairs of the members.

A head can be removed at any time by a majority of the obusua members if they think he is not acting in their interest or behaving in a way prejudicial to the welfare of the lineage.²³

Unlike some Akan tribes, the Effutu people are divided into seven principal clans.

Tradition says that the whole of the Effutu people are descendants of these seven clans.²⁴ Members of each clan are very loyal to each other, whatever the tribe may be to which they belong. Thus, when a member of a clan dies (as we shall see in Chapter 4), all the members of the clan are obliged to organise the funeral rites including the sharing of expenses. Among the Effutu people, it is the clan, not the near relatives who bear the cost of burial etc. For example, if an Anona Clan (symbolized by the Parrot) member from Ashanti comes to Effutu and dies there the Anona Clan of Effutu will bury him and share the funeral expenses inter se.

²³ The writer is indebted to the following for the information on the organisation of the summary of the obusua system in the Effutu Traditional Area. Tufuhene Gyanpanyin, Kyoama Kodwo Donkor of Gyanyanadze, Onyimpa Kodwo Sio, the Nnona Ebusua Abren, (Adviser) to the obusua-payin of Nsona obusua), Ebusua-Panyin Impraim of Anona obusua of Winnoba and Opanyin Kwoku Bondzie of Nsuekyir.

²⁴ See Appendix B for the names of the seven Effutu totemic clans.

Hence when a stranger comes to a place, he always announces the totem clan to which he belongs, and he is thereupon received by the local members of the clan as one of their kin though, in fact, he may belong to a tribe whose name is scarcely known in the district.²⁵

The interests of an individual may often clash with the authority of the collective clan group just as conflicts often arise between intimate relatives, e.g. father and son, and the incidence of such conflicts is now far more frequent. Yet the underlying conviction remains that an individual who is cut off from the communal organisation becomes a nobody; whereas : even the most antisocial behaviour of any one may be redeemed by his renewing, subscribing to the influence of authority and solidarity of the Ebusua. As the glow of a coal depends upon its remaining in the fire, so the very identity of a man, depends on his integration into the obusua.²⁶ So the Effutu proverb says: Anobo Komo a na anegyire, so ano paapato a ano behwo anyinso" (United we stand, divided we fall). Dr. J.B. Danquah maintains that what the Akan take to be good is the obusua, and that the obusua, is the highest good of the Akan.

²⁵ cf. A 'ffoulkes, "The Fante family system" In Journal of African Society Vol. V II, No.28, July, 1908, pp.3965f. Papa Yaw, a tailor at Winneba, and an Ashanti Yoko born, is a member of the Anona Ebusua. He maintains that 'Yoko' is synonymous with the Anona-Parrot family of Winneba. Such instances could easily be multiplied.

²⁶ Refer J.V. Taylor, The Primal Vision, London SCM, 1963 p.100.

(Refer "Like the Akan ethics"²⁷). The Effutu definitely hold a similar view.

There is another aspect of interest in the obusua system in the Effutu Traditional Area. As indicated earlier, every obusua has as its symbol a 'totemic animal'. This is called Grandfather(Nana), a title of respect which is also used in addressing Kings, Chiefs or Sub-Chiefs, etc.

According to Nana Akwanda, the Tufuhone of Effutu Traditional Area, members of the Ebusua greatly respect their totem, although they do not worship it as a deity. For example, an Effutu of a Leopard obusua would readily shoot a leopard if it devoured his sheep and a member of the plantain obusua would hardly say a prayer when he ate his plantain. The interesting question is why reverence is given to totemic animals of the obusua. For instance, why do Anona obusua revere the Parrot?

It is said that the original ancestress of the obusua is said to have been a woman who went to a far country and was got married there. But she quarrelled with her husband and left him to return to her own land. On her way home she met a man who would have killed her if a parrot had not screamed at the moment, and her assailant, mistaking the cry of the bird for a voice of people coming to the rescue, fled and left her.

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J.B. Danquah The Akan Doctrine of God, London, Lutterworth Press, 1944, p. ix.

Hence all the descendants of that woman respect parrots, because of what a parrot did to save the ancestress from cruel death.²⁸

In the narrative of Opanyin Kwesi Awotwe, the reverence for the totem is explained. It is gained through the service which the totemic animal is said to have rendered to the ancestress of the obusua. This is reminiscent of the other and probably more primitive explanation which appears to be contained in the story of the quarrel of the wife with her husband. All the obusua have a story to tell to explain why reverence but not worship is given to the totemic animal.

Apart from their lineage ties through the mother's mogyn (blood), the Effutu also belong to agn^astic line - the Asafo²⁹. There is a strong patrilineal element here, which rivals the Akan lineage organisation; membership in the asafo is patrilineally determined; every child normally belongs to its father's asafo but a stranger may join one by adoption. Asafo is an agnatic term for the more specific sunsum (spirits) which a child receives from his father and is the source of his distinctive personal gifts in virtue of which he is unique personality. A child's illness can result from the anger of his father's sunsum.³⁰

²⁸ This story was told by Opanyin Kwesi Awotwe of Gyahadzo, Ebusua-Payin Kwoku Bondzi of Nsona obusua of Winneba, cf. Edmund Leach ed. The structural study of Myth and Totemism, London, Tavistock Publications Limited, 1967, pp. 119-161.

²⁹ Unlike the Twi-speaking people of the Akan, the Effutus, like the Fante, have no word like 'NTORO' a word used by other Akan to describe paternal descendant; See Manoukian op.cit. p.46, Chukwakere, op.cit. pp 61-62. For the many grouping of the Ntoro cult in Akan societies, see J.B. Danquah 'Akan Society', West African Affairs, 1951, p. 12.

³⁰ Busia op. cit. p. 197.

Thus for the Effutu people kinship ties arise in two ways: through his mother's 'mogya' which makes him a member of her obusua, thus claiming for him a place in one of the seven clans; and through his father also he is a member of an asafo company.

There is yet another relationship which to some extent circumvents the absolute authority of the father and by-passes his link with the ancestors. This is the naming of a child. In African religion as found among the Effutu people, "everywhere the link between the alternate generation is regarded as a mystical one".³¹ With the Effutu people as with some Fantes, it is the sole responsibility of the father to name the infant by the name of an ancestor or more often after the mother's own father and "there is the belief that in an undefined way, the ancestor has been 'restored' to life".³²

Seen in this way, man is literally a family tree, a single branching organism whose existence is continuous through time, and whose roots, though out of sight below the earth, may spread further and wider than all the visible links above. Death, it is true, makes a difference, but only up to a point: the dead have no life force, but their power is greater and more mysterious. "Yet in this single, continuing entity there is no radical distinction between that part of the family which is 'here' and that which is 'there': a son's life is the prolongation of his father's life, of his grandfather's and of the whole lineage".³³

³¹ Refer Taylor op. cit. p. 97

³² In discussing the authenticity of this 'restoration' the Ebusua Panyin Kweku Bondzi of Nsona family, maintains that almost always the child so named is seen to have the same mannerism as the named ancestor or ancestress..

³³ cf. Taylor op. cit. pp. 97-8.

As the father is responsible for him so also are the invisible ancestors who are in the realms above. As he depends on his father, so, through his father, he depends upon them, and to them all he owes the same filial piety and submission. As a living being man is 'mogya' (physical being) 'sunsum' (individual personality) and 'Okra' (soul).³⁴

The Effutu believe in destiny. They believe that when the Supreme Being gives the 'Okra' (soul) he also gives 'nrabea' (destiny) - "meaning the soul's place or manner".³⁵ This destiny, known only to the Supreme Being, (God) and which none but He can change, concerns the general quality and ultimate end of a man's life. At death the 'Okra' (as we shall see later in the thesis) returns to 'Onyankopon', God.

Many books have been written on 'African traditional religions'. These traditional African religions are not universal, but tribal, even though they have much in common. Each religion is binding on and limited to the people among whom it has evolved. One individual does not preach his religion to another. This is because each tribe has its own religious system with a particular set of beliefs and practices. A person born into a particular tribe has to assimilate the doctrine or beliefs of his tribal religion. As seen in any true African, religion seems to impregnate the whole life of the Effutu so fully that it is not easy or possible to isolate it.³⁶

³⁴ This section was obtained from Odonsu, Supi of Asafo Company, Ebusua-Panyin Nana Kow Mensah, Kyeame Kwonuo Etsiba of Gyanyanadzo and Nana Akom of Ateitu during field work in 1983.

³⁵ Refer J.G. Christaller, Dictionary of the Ashante and Fante Language. rev. and enlarged by J. Schweizer (1933 edition).

³⁶ cf. also Baeta, op. cit. p. 295.

The Effutus have no word in their vocabulary for 'religion'. They serve (som) the Supreme Being (Onyame or Nyimpo) and this is "Onyamesom" or Nyimpo-som. They likewise speak of serving the gods (ape), and this is ape som or 'abosomsom'. Som* may be used of service offered to a chief or superior person, and this is relatively significant. (In the Effutu Christian society Onyamesom expresses their concept of religion). To an Effutu, religion is invariably mingled with his festivals, the days of mourning, his work and all other activities or incidents of life. Some particular ways in which religion shows itself prominently in the world of the Effutu are funeral rites, offerings, sacrifices, and in their vocations, notably medicine, science, superstition and magic. Thus religion to an Effutu is not merely a religious system with a creed, a moral code and liturgy; rather it is an institution in which one's whole life is so much involved. The Effutus are regarded in Ghana as a peculiar tribe. This is because of their religious outlook, especially during their special festivals. These are (1) Akomase - the festival for remembering the dead as well as purifying their ancestral stools; and (2) Deer Hunting Festival - the festival for catching a deer and offering it to their chief deity, Penkye Otu. This offering is more or less a means of pacification for the chief deity, and involves the entire Effutu community whereas the Akomase is the concern of individual ebusua or families.³⁷

* Som is a common word used in both Effutu and Fante.

³⁷ The field work upon which it is based was conducted on May 11, 1985, the day of Deer Hunting Festival.

Apart from 'Penkye Otu' (the chief deity), the people have 'abosom'³⁸ or lesser gods too and these are said to be as many as seventy seven. Thus the saying 'Effutu-Abosom eduosuon esuom' (Effutu seventy seven gods). The Effutu are also known for their animistic beliefs such as charms (assuman). These asuman are repositories of power and consist of a variety of substances and concoction. The asuman are used to protect against the power of evil spirits or the use of black magic, though it may also be used to work harm against wrong doers or hated persons. The asuman may be a personal or group possession.³⁹

The Effutus are again known for their keen interest in 'ogyapa' (witchcraft).⁴⁰ The specific concept of Ogyapa denotes some specific supernatural power which man can become possessed of and is used exclusively for evil against hated neighbours or individuals.

There is also a relationship between religion and ethics. The Effutu religion is seen as very much allied to moral ideas. The Effutu gods do punish those who do not conform to the moral code of the state.

³⁸ The derivation of the word abosom (lesser gods) is uncertain; it appears to come from 'obo' meaning 'rock' and 'som' to serve. But as trees and rivers and other objects can be abosom this derivation is either false, or the word is of so ancient an origin that a word once narrowly applied has acquired a wider significance. In Akim Abuakwa Handbook, 1928, p. 84, J.B. Danquah maintains that there seems to be evidence for believing that the present form of fetish worship is a foreign acquisition which historical research may prove to have entered into their way of living at the time.

³⁹ In contrast ^{to} this the priest-chief, Onyimpa Kow Dantse maintained that the clan or abusua of a patient could be an important clue or index, perhaps psychologically in treating his clients. He was of the opinion that most misfortunes originate from a person's lineage network, that is 'abusua mu nkrabea'.

⁴⁰ R.W. Wyllie, "Introspective Witchcraft Among the Effutu of Southern Ghana". MAN. Vol. VII No. 1 March, 1973, p 75.

⁴¹ During the course of the writer's field work in September, 1983, he witnessed the healing of a person who had sexual intercourse on a farm. As a result he became mad. According to the chief-fetish priest, such madness was believed to be caused as a punishment by the state gods. It was believed that only state fetish priests could heal the patient. But in the long run, the patient in question was sent to the Government Hospital where he was properly treated. For this and other ethical or moral virtues in Akan societies, see. C.A. Ackah, 'An Ethical Study of Akan Tribes of Ghana' Ph. D. Thesis, University of London, 1959 especially Chapters 7 and 8. See also J.B. Ellis, 'The Twi-Speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast, 1887, pp. 10-11.

The Effutus like the Akan very well understand that the Supreme Being (Nyimpo/Nyankopon) is against evil. For example, there is the adage: "Nyimpo (God) maado fembi or Onyame mmpe bon" (God dislikes evil). In fact the Effutus believe that both gods and ancestors abhor wrong-doing and wrong doing is to be punished.

Harmony should prevail in the state. The ancestors and the gods punish those who violate the traditional sanctioned code, and reward those who keep it. Williamson⁴² writes: "A student once remarked, 'in olden times there were no policemen and no need of them; the gods were policemen'". Fembi or bon is a general word for evil. The Effutu, like other Akan tribes understand it to mean, among other things wrong-doing of the kind that leads to disharmony between a man and his neighbours. The Effutus, do, however, distinguish between what is a matter for private investigation and arbitration between man and man, or between family and family, and what is of public concern and has to be brought before the gods. It is these latter cases which come to a public trial, and settlement of the issue is inconceivable without the pouring of libation⁴³ and sometimes blood sacrifice.

⁴² S. C. Williamson, Akan Religion and the Christian Faith, Accra, Ghana University Press, 1965, p. 89.

⁴³ According to Opanyin Kweku Enu of Nsuekyir, Papa Kwesi Andze of Ateitu, Opanyin Kow Amansuon of Winneba, libation is part of every Effutu social life. This we shall see later in the thesis.

Cases of the former character are dealt with privately and appear to the outsider to be of no concern to the State or the gods.

This distinction between what broadly may be termed public and private wrongs should not be allowed to convey a false impression. The Effutus know that the customs and traditional ways of life, sanctioned by the spirit-ancestors and the gods provide the framework of their ethical code, and that any ethical code of the ancestors and the gods is of the Supreme Being.⁴⁴

The Effutu and the Arrival of Christianity

So far we have seen who the Traditional Effutu people are, and the kind of primitive religion they originally pursued. Now let us see how Christianity was introduced to or got implanted in them. This will provide a clear background for the study of their problems in theology as well as in their beliefs and practices concerning the dead and life after death.

The Christian mission in Ghana began with the arrival of two Portuguese ships off the village of Shama in January 1471.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ During the course of the writer's field work, in 1983 and 1985, all the people the writer encountered maintained that all that the Supreme Being wanted was harmony among mankind. That was exactly what the ancestors and the gods also desire.

⁴⁵ The two ships were John Santonem and Pero de Escobar, See M.J. Bapa, The Popes and West Africa, 1460-1960, Rome 1968 pp. 123f.

From that date, when a 'huge wooden cross' was sunk into their soil by the landing party, and when an order for 'one half million Bibles and Testaments' was placed, Ghanaians have been the recipients of Christianity from the West.⁴⁶

When Europeans first came into touch with Ghanaians, by the highway of the open sea, governments professed zeal for the spread of the Christian religion, and the inscription: "the name of Christ might be extended" was the motto given to the children of the Ghanaian natives. Nothing was seen to be incongruous in teaching the Gospel. The instructions were that "to stimulate the slaves to attention while at school and to induce them to learn the Christian prayers, they should be promised a glass of brandy and two inches of tobacco".⁴⁷ Repugnant as these methods appear today they bear witness at least to a desire to spread the Christian religion.

But all the attempts made by the Europeans i.e., the Portuguese, the French and the Dutch, to even^agelise the Ghanaian failed. In summing up their policy from the point of view of an eyewitness of 1680 B^abot⁴⁸ has this to say:

⁴⁶ Ralph M. Wiltgen, Gold Coast Mission. History: 1471-1880, 1956, p.2; Bible Society Record, Vol. 110 No. 8, Oct., 1965, p. 124. To this may be added C. C. Reindorf, The History of the Gold Coast and Ashante;: Based on Traditions and Historical facts comprising a period of more than three centuries, from 1500-1860, London 2nd Edition, 1966.

⁴⁷ E. W. Smith, The Christian Mission in Africa, London, 1926, p. 8.

⁴⁸ John B^abot, A description of the Coasts of North and South Guinea, trans. from French. Churchill's Collection of Voyages and Travels, Vol. V, London, 1732.

"The great concern of the Dutch on this coast, as well as of all other Europeans, settled or trading there, is the gold and not the welfare of those souls: for by their lewd loose lives, many who live among these poor wretches, rather harden them in their wickedness, than turn them for it. I beg leave to mention this with sorrow, to the dishonour of Christianity".

The inability of these first missionaries to disassociate themselves and their service from the political and economic concerns of their governments may well have been the major reason why Christianity did not take root. The Dutch on the whole made no attempt to evangelise the African population, but contented themselves with supplying chaplains for the needs of their own staff.⁴⁹ The slave trade was another factor in the failure of Christianity to establish itself to its fullest extent in sub-Saharan Africa. It was surprising to note from records that the Church had legitimated this traffic. Armattoo⁵⁰ maintains that originally Europeans held that "the Negro was subhuman and in this way he became a legitimate commodity". The failure of European Christianity to root itself in Ghana in the early days has also been attributed to its Western, foreign structure.⁵¹

The early missions, particularly Roman Catholic (1471-1737), made very little permanent impression upon the people of Ghana. They were followed by the Protestant pioneers.

⁴⁹ Refer W. E. Ward, A History of Ghana, Oxford, 1958, p. 80.

⁵⁰ R. E. G. Armattoo, The Golden Age of West African Civilization, Pub. for the Lomeshie research by "The Londonderry sentinel" 1946, p. 42.

⁵¹ Mark Hayford, West Africa and Christianity, London, Baptist Trust and Book Society, 1903, p. 241. See also Robert T. Hardy, ed. Religion in American Experience: The Pluralistic Style, Columbia University of South Carolina Press, 1972, p. viii. Ironically a remnant of the early Portuguese attempt can be found today in the symbols of the syncretistic cult called Nana Ntoa of Elmina. See Harris W. Mobley, The Ghanaian's image of the Missionary, Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1970, p. 17

In 1752⁵² the Rev. T. Thompson an Anglican Clergyman, came to Ghana. His primary concern was the pastoral care of the colonists and only secondarily the ^aevangelization of the indigenous people. Thompson's presence marked the beginning of the first Anglican mission in all Africa.⁵³ In four years Thompson managed to set an example admired by subsequent missionaries and Ghanaian's alike. He made friends, and the chief of Cape Coast allowed him to hold meetings in his palace, initially acting as his interpreter. Thompson very quickly set about to learn the native language-Fante. He took the advice of Ghanaians who urged him to hold services on Tuesday as this was the day the people attended to their own god.⁵⁴ In 1756⁵⁵ Thompson returned to England on account of sickness. He is remembered chiefly for his pamphlet published in 1772: 'The African Trade for Negro Slaves shown to be consistent with the principles of humanity and with the laws of revealed religion'.⁵⁶ As this publication came from the only man in Europe who had given years of his life for the redemption of Africans "we cannot wonder at the condonement of slavery by ordinary Christians in the eighteenth century".⁵⁷

⁵² See C.H. Elliot, 'Miscellanea Anglicana' The Ghana Bulletin of Theology I, June 1958, pp.5-12.

⁵³ Harris W. Mobley, The Ghanaians' Image of the Missionary, Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1970, p. 19.

⁵⁴ Kwesi A. Dickson "Relation between Religion and Culture", Ghana Bulletin of Theology, I, 1958, p.41.

⁵⁵ C.P. Groves, The Planting of Christianity in Africa, Vol.1, London, Lutterworth Press, 1964 p.175.

⁵⁶ D.N.B. XIX, 703a, where E. I. Carlyle says of the book, that Thompson "without considering the subject very deeply, draws his arguments from Aristotle and his illustration from the Pentateuch" Granville Sharp Published a reply in 1776 entitled The Just Limitation of Slavery in the Laws of God. To which is added a plan for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery in the Colonies - E.C.P. Lascollos, Granville Sharp (1928), 139.

⁵⁷ Smith, op. cit. p. 9.

Thompson's departure created a great vacuum, and at the beginning of the nineteenth century the only accredited representative of the Evangel in West Africa was Philip Quaque, an African Clergyman who was one of the products of Thompson's mission. Quaque was the first Ghanaian to receive Anglican orders, serving as a missionary for the (Anglican) Society for the Propagation of the Gospel until his death in 1816.⁵⁸

Without doubt, these earlier efforts to establish Christianity in Ghana had only minimal results in the nineteenth century. Denominational Christian churches had yet to be established. On the East coast and throughout the heart of Africa not a single missionary was to be found.⁵⁹ It was not before the mid-nineteenth century that another full-time appointment as missionary was made by the S.P.G. to the Gold Coast.⁶⁰

Thus the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries slipped by with the Christian enterprise in Ghana all but dormant, while the evil tentacles of the slave-trade so enveloped the continent of Africa that only the doughtiest champion could hope to set it free.

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T. Thompson, An Account of two missionary voyages, London, published for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1937, pp.66-7; Charles Frederick Pascoe, Two hundred years of the S.P.G.: an historical account of the society for the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts, London, Published at the Society's Office, 1901, l.p. 197, 199.

59 Smith, op.cit. p.9.

60 Pascoe, op.cit. pp. 258-9.

But in this same eighteenth century deliverance was being contemplated. There came a rebirth of missionary zeal in both the Protestant and the Roman Catholic communions. When fresh religious conceptions prevailed the liberated Christian spirit flowed over in a great effort to repair the errors of the past and to bring new life to the whole of Africa, including Ghana.

From 1828 to 1904 five Protestant missionary societies began work in Ghana, four of which had by 1965 given birth to autonomous churches, and arrived at the point of merger. The five Protestant churches are (1) The Presbyterian Church of Scotland arriving in 1828; (2) Wesleyan Methodist arriving in 1835; (3) Bremen arriving in 1847⁶¹ (4) African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church arriving in 1898; and (5) The Anglican Church or Society for the Propagation of the Gospel becoming well established with a strong footing in 1904.

It was Andreas Riis from the Basel society who set the pattern for the foundation of the Presbyterian church of Ghana.⁶² But all this time Ghanaians had not been convinced about Christianity and this was shown by the fact that Riis was not able to report having made even one convert to the Basel Society in 1840.

⁶¹ The Bremen Mission started their work in Eweland in 1847, and out of their work came the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ghana. See Engon Grau, 'The Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ghana' Ph.D. Thesis, Hartford Seminar Foundation, Hartford, Connecticut, U.S.A. 1964. Here it should be said that the Church of Scotland has helped both the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church since the first world war when the Basel and the Bremen missionaries were sent out of the country.

⁶² The Basel Mission came to the Gold Coast in 1828. It was through their work that the Presbyterian Church of Ghana was born. See also Noel J. Smith The Presbyterian Church of Ghana 1835-1960: a Younger Church in a changing Society, Accra 1962; Samuel Prempeh, 'The Basel and Bremen Missions and their successors in the Gold Coast and Togo, 1914-1926' Ph.D. Thesis, University of Aberdeen, Scotland, 1977.

In 1843 at the Mission Presbytery of the Scottish Missionary Society in Jamaica Riis recruited six West Indian families for settlement in Ghana with the hope that he might convince the Ghanaians that Christianity was not a religion only for the White man. Riis retired in 1845. The policies which he initiated as well as the Scottish missionaries' role in fostering the Africanisation⁶³ of the Church gave birth to the autonomous Presbyterian Church of Ghana in 1950.⁶⁴

The Methodist Church, Ghana,⁶⁵ developed along the lines of its parent society in England, which was characterized by Bartels⁶⁶ as "a people's movement" in contrast to the Basel or Presbyterian pattern where "decisions of moment ... were taken by missionaries on whom rested the responsibility for the pastoral supervision of the entire work".

⁶³ An example of Africanization is the literally work done by Christaller. See J. G. Christaller, Dictionary of the Asante and Fante Language called Twi: 2nd Edition, Revised and Enlarged, Basel B.EN. S. 1933.

⁶⁴ A body whose membership had grown to almost 50,000 by 1959. cf. Eugene E. Grau, "The Evangelical Presbyterian Church" Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Hartford Seminary Foundation, 1964, pp. 67-71. Facts and observation; Missionary Research Library 1959, p. 29. Mobley op. cit. p. 23. See also Noel Smith, The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, 1835-1960, Accra: Ghana University Press, 1966, p. 155.

⁶⁵ I am greatly indebted to F. L. Bartels, The Roots of Ghana Methodism, Cambridge, 1965, for most of the materials which deal with the Wesleyan or the Methodist Church, Ghana. The writer's access to the Methodist Church Archives in Accra, Ghana and his research in early part of 1985 has also added some useful information dealing with local Methodist activities. In fact wealth of materials exist in the Archives for Church Historians to explore.

⁶⁶ F. L. Bartels, The Roots of Ghana Methodism, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1965, pp. 119-120.

Yet the Wesleyans shared with their (Basel) Presbyterian contemporaries the obstacles encountered in establishing a foothold because of disease and death. Beneath the Methodist pulpit at Cape Coast lies buried some missionaries and their wives. The inscription reads: "Sacred to the memory of our earliest missionaries".⁶⁷ These Wesleyans, though full of zeal, did not have training in mission methods like their contemporaries from Basel and were consequently less tolerant of the indigenous religion and culture.⁶⁸

In January 1838, Thomas Birch Freeman,⁶⁹ the Wesleyan Methodist, arrived in Cape Coast. Like Riis, Freeman's ministry sketched the pattern for Methodism in Ghana. He believed that the only means of carrying on the work must be a native ministry.⁷⁰ He married a Ghanaian who bore him four sons and two daughters. His oldest son became a pastor.⁷¹

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Rev. Joseph R. Dunwell/Rev. & Mrs. George O. Wringley; Rev. & Mrs. Peter Hatrop/1835-1837 whose remains lie buried beneath this pulpit. Bartels Ibid. p.120. During his Garden Address to delegates of the International Missionary Council in 1957, the Late President Kwame Nkrumah praised the devotion and sacrifice of these and other pioneers. R.K. Orchard, The Ghana Assembly of International Missionary Council. Accra; 1955, p. 148.

68

Refer Mobley, op.cit. p. 24.

69

For a detailed account of Freeman's work on the Gold Coast see Freeman papers, 1841-1900, 390 items, Ghana National Archives, Sc.4, 350-370. To this may be added Arthur E. Southon Gold Coast Methodism, The 1st 100 years, 1835-1935. Methodist Book Depot, Cape Coast, 1936.

70

Bartels, op.cit. p. 17.

71

Ernest Bruce. "Reminiscences of Ghana Methodism" in Foundation Conference, 1961, p.25. Bruce was 'Oldman Freeman's' Interpreter. Mobley, op.cit. p.25.

On June 10th, 1838, Freeman opened the first chapel in the (Gold Coast) Gham, Independent of the forts; the church had at last been brought from within the castle walls.⁷² Freeman became the first missionary to visit Ashanti⁷³ where he was fully accepted in Kumasi.⁷⁴

The Methodist Church became autonomous in 1960, but it had since the second world war played an increasingly significant role in the nationalistic movement.

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church has contributed to the nationistic movement as well as to the revival of the church through its bicultural members since at least the inter-war period. It was formed out of the Bremen mission which had been invited by the Basel missionaries who relinquished some of their territory⁹ to the Bremen group in 1848.

The introduction of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in 1898 was by its American Bishop, B.J. Small. This church was one of the first independent churches in the Gold Coast and was formed by a Fante schism from the Wesleyan Methodist in Cape Coast in 1862.⁷⁵

72

Ibid. p. 25

73

For a comprehensive account of Methodist Missionary Activities in Ashanti see A.H. Mildron, Ashanti Past and Present, Kingdom Overseas 1935. To this may be added C.K. Yamoah, unpublished interview with Sampson Oppon, May 1960. It was through Mr. Oppon's evangelical preaching that many converts were enlisted in the Methodist Church in Ashanti.

74

Bartels, op.cit. p.25.

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The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Ghana owed its origin to a widespread resentment of white missionary control of the Methodist church towards the end of the nineteenth century. Most of the early members had formerly belonged to the Methodist Church and were concerned with creating an African controlled Methodist Church in Ghana. In doctrine and ethos, however, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church remained patently Methodist, although it has an Episcopalian form or organisation.

In addition to the Protestant we have the Roman Catholic Church which is influencing Ghanaian society.

After 1880 Roman Catholic Missions came on the scene. Within twenty-five years evangelistic work had been established at Elmina⁷⁶ and Cape Coast, at Accra, at Keta and at Navrongo in the former Northern Territories. Thus from the east and west of the country the Roman Catholic entered the traditional Basel and Wesleyan spheres of work. There was little or no official contact between these three church bodies during this period apart from their mutual concern with education, and, in Ashanti in 1912, their combined pressure upon the Government to regulate the question of swearing native oaths and of customary obligations. Following the establishment of hierarchy in 1950, the first Ghanaian bishop was consecrated in 1957 and became archbishop in 1960. In 1970, 15.8% of the population ^oprofessed to be Catholic.⁷⁷

In addition to the Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches which are influencing Ghanaian society, there are also some indigenous, or what are normally called spiritual or independent churches.⁷⁸ The growth of these churches in Ghana has been phenomenal. By 1970 over 420 indigenous denominations in Ghana were active, and many more have subsequently been established.

⁷⁶ See Kobina Nketsia, "The Effect of Christian Missionary Activities on the 'Eina Coast' in 1842-1966". D. Phil. Thesis, Oxford University, 1959, p. 125ff.

⁷⁷ An account of the study of the early evangelism on the Gold Coast can be found in Ralph M. Wiltgen, Gold Coast Mission History; 1477-1880, Illinois, 1956, pp. 14-17. See also C. C. Reindorf, The History of the Gold Coast and Ashante: Based on Traditions and Historical facts comprising a period of more than three contruries, from 1500-1860, London, 2nd edition, 1966.

⁷⁸ See C. G. Baeta, Prophetism in Ghana: A study of some Spiritual Churches, London, SCM Press, 1962, R. T. Parsons, The Churches and Ghana Society, Leiden: Brill, 1963.

Apart from Christianity, there is also Islam in Ghana.⁷⁹

Islam has its strength in northern Ghana although Muslim penetration is not as extensive as is commonly thought. In the south, Islam has been confined largely to Hausa immigrants from Nigeria and Cameroon. However, the Aliens' Compliance Order of December 1969 resulted in the expulsion from Ghana of nearly two-thirds of all Hausas during 1970. Muslims are mostly of the ~~Malikite~~ sect (6.4% of the population of 1970) or Ahmadiyya (6.3%). Only 1.2% belong to the ~~Shafite~~ sect or other Muslim sects.

We have seen the development of Christian Churches in Ghana in general. Now let us turn to the Effutu Traditional Area and see how Christianity developed.

The first Christian body to be established in the Effutu Traditional area was the "Methodist Society". This was founded in 1934, by William de Graft.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ See B.A.R. Braimah, 'Islamic Education in Ghana' Religion in a Pluralistic Society, J.S. Pobee ed; E.J. Brill, 1976 p.201f. Here it should be noted that the writer is of the opinion that the unfavourable impact made on Islamic religion by the Europeans, particularly British was so great that Islam could not survive as the Christian religion did in Ghana. See also Ivor Wilks, 'Islam in Ghana History', The Ghana Bulletin of Theology 11, December, 1962 p.28f.

⁸⁰ Methodist Missionary Society Archives, Gold Coast (1835-41), Wringley 17 October 1836; Biographical West Africa, Box 1, Wringley 34 Oct, 1836. To this may be added R.W. Wylie, "Pastors and Prophets in Winnoba Ghana" Their Social background and Social development". Africa. XLIX, p.186.

In Winneba today there are some twenty seven different churches.

Among them are the following major denominations:⁸¹

- (a) The Methodist Church with a Christian community of about 4141.
- (b) The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church with a Christian community of about 1906.
- (c) The Society for the ^Ppropagation of the Gospel)
The Anglican Church with a Christian community of about 2906.
- (d) The Roman Catholic Church⁸² with a Christian community of about 3960 and
- (e) The Presbyterian Church with a Christian community of about 1340.

Apart from the above orthodox churches there are also Independent or Spiritual Churches in the Effutu Traditional Area.

⁸¹ This was compiled from the Minutes Book, Council of Churches Winneba, 1984-1985 meeting held on 4/11/84, especially section dealing with Numerical Returns.

⁸² Full credit must be given to the Roman Catholic Church for her missionary zeal. Its progress has been spectacular. It was able to profit from the mistakes of the Protestants and able to overcome oppositions. Catholic missionary activity restarted in Ghana in general when control of tropical diseases was making headway; less overshadowed by the continuous death toll of the past, it was able to attract a new recruitment from the manpower resources of peasant Europe, its agents being drawn in the main from France, Ireland and Holland. It was helped in its strategy by the over-all responsibility retained by the congregation for the propagation of the faith (Propaganda Fide) without at the same time using the singleness of direction provided by the individual missionary orders. In contrast to the larger Protestant societies, the responsibility of many of the Catholic orders was limited to Effutu and some other regions in Ghana. This made possible a great concentration of resources. This thesis is concerned only the Methodist Church in particular and the Protestant Churches in general. This is because within the Church itself the era of missionary domination is passing, or has already passed. The main non-Roman Churches are by constitution wholly and largely responsible for the conduct of their own affairs. The Roman Church, while incorporated in a supranational ecclesiastical system, is a province under an archiepiscopal see. Missionaries are still

The officially recognised ones are those affiliated with the Local Council of Churches and these are:

1. Ebonozor Calvary Church
2. Graceful Healing Church
3. Church of the Lord (Mission).
4. Naz^arene Healing Church.

82(cont'd) received by all the churches and without exception as members of the sending societies but, the Roman Catholics excepted, their relation to the receiving churches is auxiliary. This does not preclude a missionary from the exercise of high office at the express wish of the local church and within the framework of the existing relationship of the Local church to the missionary society. It seems unlikely that missionary service will be discontinued in Effutu/Akan churches for a long time to come, but the non-Roman Churches are no longer controlled or deminated from overseas. (By the way the Roman Catholic Church in Effutu Traditional Area is locally controlled by Dutch Priests of the society of the Divine Word). Willie, op.cit. p. 187. Furthermore, non-Roman churches and Roman churches' theologies differ according to the differences between Protestants and Catholic ecclesiologies. Just as churches differ, according to their respective ecclesiologies, about the norms governing Christian faith, so too they differ about norms governing theological thought. Both non-Roman Churches and the Roman Catholic Church accept the privileged place of the bible but differ about the norms governing its interpretation; both in some way accept an interpretative role of tradition but differ about its normative value. So, protestant Biblical theology differs from Catholic biblical theology in this respect, and Protestant dogmatic theology differs from Catholic dogmatic theology in the same respect; but for both Protestants and Catholics a biblical and dogmatic theology are possible: John Coulson, ed. Theology and the University, London, Longman and Todd, 1964, p. 129.

5. Fedon Church
6. Christ Healing Power Church
7. Jesus of Naz^aproth Church
8. Faith Cherubim and Seraphim Church
9. Musama Disco Christo Church.⁸³

In the Effutu Traditional Area (as elsewhere) people are converted to the Christian faith for a variety of reasons and the motives of converts are especially confusing when missionary activities are organized by European missionaries with a different cultural background. Thus maintains Williamson, "it has been shown that the success of the church in Europe among the Western barbarians was in no small part due to its intimate alliance with Graeco-Roman culture".⁸⁴

In West Africa, and certainly among the Effutu people, a similar process may be discerned; people have been converted to the church for what may be described as secondary reasons, that is, reasons not specifically religious, some of which are as follows:

First the secondary reasons which led to the expansion of the Christian faith among the Effutu. In the New World, in Africa, since the fifteenth century and in part of the East, the propagation of the Christian faith has been carried out through association with the rise and expansion of European power.

⁸³ Refer Local Council of Churches: Minutes Book - Meeting held on 21st January, 1985.

⁸⁴ Williamson, op.cit. p. 17.

As already indicated, the Portuguese were the first Europeans to explore the coast of Africa. They had two motives in doing that - commercial gain, coupled with the idea of propagating the gospel and also of finding the renowned "Prester John"⁸⁵. The Europeans' interest in slave trade preceded every interest so that there was no real hope of effectively propagating the Christian faith. "To get money, not to save lives, is the whole spring of their motives".⁸⁶ "The profit motive perpetuated the evil for all concerned".⁸⁷ (This may sound harsh, but it is unquestionably true). The nineteenth century, however, saw the abolition of this slavery and the awakening of a humanitarian and religious interest in Africa⁸. It saw also the expansion of legitimate trade and governmental influence and resulted in the scramble for territory in Africa.

The first group of people the Europeans came in contact with in Ghana were the Fantes on the coast of which the Effutu are a part. In 1874, when the Gold Coast (Ghana) became a Crown colony with Ashanti annexed in 1901, the church had phenomenal success especially in the half-century following 1901. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that the spread of British influence throughout Akan, (Effutu not excepted) and the vast extension of the church falling within the same period,

⁸⁵ See G.K. Osei, Europe's Gift to Africa, London. African Publication Society, 1968, p.29.

⁸⁶ John Wesley, The Works of John Wesley Vol.ii. A Novel Rapid Zondervan Publishing House, 1958, pp.71,72.

⁸⁷ Sanctification and Liberation ed. by Theodore Runyon, Muaville, Abingdon, 1981, p.12. It should be acknowledged also that many of the "cultural imperialism" points have been well understood for many years.

are closely interrelated. It might mean no more than that. With the opening up of the country under Government, and through trade, the Christian missionary and his agents travelled freely abroad. Christian Effutu/Akan, moving about in the interest of commercial enterprise and employment, carried both their now-found faith and their expression of it with them.

Another factor which undoubtedly brought about the popularity of the church and its extension among the Effutu as it was with other Akan people was the provision through missionary effort of literary education. Groves, who, as an ex-missionary and life time student of missionary work in Africa, has a right to be heard with respect, describes this desire as "for the most part ... a secular demand"⁸⁸. It is a fact that the aim in fostering education was religious as well as humanitarian. Again it is also true that the type of education offered and to so high a standard was an open sesame to the economic success of the people.

There was a social aspect of the missionary enterprise for both the educated and non-educated people - all found the church as an institution which catered for their peculiar skills and tastes. "Thus, for both educated and pre-literate the Church was a popular social institution ... which gave them recognition and security".⁸⁹

⁸⁸ C.P. Groves, The Planting of Christianity in Africa, Vol.iii, London, Lutterworth Press, 1964, p.287.

⁸⁹ K.A. Busia, Sokondi-Takoradi Survey, 1950, p.79, States: "The Christian Church is popular as a social institution, but Christian faith and ideas have not penetrated deep in the life of the community".

The Church has played a part and still does so by providing associations which cater not only for the social interests of people but also help to provide insurance assistance in times of need.⁹⁰ These associations are very important. Among other things, they offer the individual help in times of bereavement by contributing to the cost of burial and attendance at funerals.⁹¹ Such societies help to keep people in close association with the church.

It was inevitable that the church, with its influence spreading to surrounding towns and villages and its widening interest in education, should open schools and employ teachers accordingly. In fact, in other fields such as agriculture the church has attracted many to its ranks as an employer.⁹² On a number of counts, therefore, it is reasonable to argue that the Effutus have been attracted to the Church for secondary reasons.

⁹⁰ These societies have developed within the church from below. The average missionary may know very little about them - unless he or she is plunged right into Church life. The Effutu/Akan pastors welcome them because they hold people to the church. In one church at least, they are officially viewed with disfavour since they absorb energies in a direction not deemed specifically Christian.

⁹¹ In Effutu Traditional Area there are in every village or town more than six associations of this kind. But the most recognisable ones are the 'Hope' and 'Honesty' Societies. Unless one is a Christian one can never be a member. On the death of a member there is about (₦2,000) two thousand nedis donation to the bereaved obusua. See also K.A. Busia, "Religious Associations and the Town" in Africa Continent of Change, California, Wadsworth Publishing Co, 1961, p.209.

⁹² In The Effutu Traditional Area, the Methodist, the Anglican, the Presbyterian and some others have pledged to intensify their agricultural programmes to help improve upon the socio-economic standards of the rural folk and their inhabitants. The programmes are on food production, crop, animal husbandry, and inland fisheries.

However, there is also evidence of primary motives for accepting the Christian faith in the Effutu land. Informants differ considerably as to primary reasons for joining the church. One therefore can only conclude that primary causes concern the individuals personal response to the missionary proclamation, with spiritual consequences.

In the Effutu Protestant Churches, the majority of the membership are humble illiterates who more readily respond to the directions of the pastor and the catechist than the literate members, so that the Church court has less to do in the matter of discipline.⁹³ They are the backbone of the Church's real, life and by them the preponderant proportion of the Church's finances is raised. Yet, one sees that very little is done for them, especially those in the rural areas, for instance, in Winneba, where church services and much of the church's life are conducted in the English tongue.⁹⁴ What therefore attracts these illiterate members to the Church? Secondary motives, of course. The 'clubs' and 'societies' which bind them to the Church have been mentioned.

⁹³ This is the writer's field-work experience during his ministry as a circuit minister in Accra District, Winneba District and Sekondi/Takoradi District of the Ghana Methodist Church. Furthermore, the writer's interviews with other protestant brothers confirm this.

⁹⁴ It is the usual practice for a preacher to preach first in English for about twenty minutes, thus giving very little time to vernacular. In Winneba there are many high educational institutions like 'The Advanced Teachers' Training College, The Specialist Training College, The Academy of Music, The Boarder Guard Training Depot, The Winneba Secondary School, The Winneba Academy Secondary School, to mention a few. There are also many Government offices. All these indicate the cosmopolitan nature of the area.

In rural areas, 'clubs' and 'societies' are less in evidence⁹⁵ and the social significance of Church membership therefore is less attractive, where the Church member lives a more closely integrated family (ebusua) life. Yet in these areas the Church flourishes. An outward attraction which may have an inward significance is the impressiveness of the Church in its organization and buildings, its hymns and liturgies, its vestments and appointments, its sacramental rites and ceremonial occasions, and above all, its burial services for the dead.

No doubt, all this accounts in some measure for the success of the Church's camp meetings, an evangelistic method more popular in the past ^a than today, though it is still in use. Such meetings may last for more than a day. The Church members of the area gather in an appointed village; homes in the village and the surrounding villages are visited, processions of witness are held, and conventions for preaching and testimony take place. In fact, for the participant the camp meeting is deemed to be a joyous Christian fellowship which kindles the love for serious evangelistic understanding. The non-christian members are undoubtedly impressed by the organized congregation well dressed⁹⁶ and participating keenly in the worship of God, including the singing of ebibindwom (lyrics) and hymns, the use of sacred books, and the services conducted under the leadership of well-educated

⁹⁵ For instance, Nsuekyir, Ateitu, Sankor and some of the Effutu rural areas have no 'Hope' or 'Honesty' society. However, societies like 'were kyekye Forye Kuw' 'Wonsuom Wonve Eyimpa' and Forye Kuw are being established in these towns.

⁹⁶ This is the occasion when the 'singing Band' - which is the preliterate group of singers in the church, put on their ceremonial pink or blue dresses and march through every corner of the village or town. The joy of putting on a new dress is indeed a happy occasion for them.

ministers and catechists. Spiritual inspiration is acquired by all who adequately tune in with the infinite during divine worship. It is at such meetings that many converts are won, sometimes in great numbers. (The Writer had been a witness to a performance by a juju - priest who brought his juju to be burnt publicly). The converts who are classified as catechumens in the Methodist Church undergo instruction as laid down by the church before baptism and confirmation. Camp meetings can also be considered as a means of attracting new members to the Church, and their value lies in the extent to which it is possible to bring those impressed by the church in action into the membership of the church.

Attempts to get new members to explain their reasons for joining the church meet with no useful response. Their replies range from the 'seemingly frivolous to the impeccably orthodox';⁹⁷ there may be references to visions, to recovery from illness, to escape from road accident⁹⁸, to a parent's dying wish,⁹⁹ and to the desire to go to heaven when they die. It is not often that one meets what might be called a deep religious need expressed and fulfilled through conversion. This may be, of course, because the new members are inclined to declare or externalize their experiences.

⁹⁷ Refer Williamson, op. cit. p. 82.

⁹⁸ cf. Wylie, op. cit. p. 191: "The Methodist pastor had been promised to God's service by his parents during their prayers for his recovery from a serious childhood accident".

⁹⁹ cf. Ibid. p. 191: "...Anglican pastors felt that they had been born to be ministers of God, pointing to the fact that they were raised by very devout parents who assumed that their sons would eventually enter the ministry".

Above all, the most common factor in the attraction of the Effutu to the Church relates to the Christian emphasis on the Supreme Being as the Creator and His ability to save all who repent and believe in his Son Jesus Christ. All informants maintain that this inspires or awakens greatly the feeling of the Effutu. This conviction is found in a common proverb which runs thus: Nyame ye kokrobetsir a se ikwetsir no a nntum mmbo pow, (God is like the thumb without which one cannot tie a knot).

Notwithstanding the importance in traditional religion of lesser gods and spirit-ancestors, constant and invariable reference to Nyimpo - the Supreme Being - is a common belief of the Effutu. Their language is rich in titles and honour given to Nyimpo or Nyankopon. In most religious practice, such as drumming performances, State Festivals and ceremonies or rites held for lesser gods, and particularly in the pouring of libations the name of the Supreme Being is called. Among the Effutu as among the Akan in general, there is always a conscious awareness and acknowledgement of Nyimpo/Nyankopon as the origin of all things and the supreme 'power' in nature. He is often regarded as the "Most Paramount Chief". This indicates their highest reverence for the Arch-creator who fully deserves honour and worship. On this rests the core of their faith or belief.

The Church's effort in evangelising countries in Africa, South of the Sahara is impressive. Yet the Church is under attack in many newly independent African countries and tribes such as the Effutu Traditional Area.

This is because of the Churches' tendency to turn their back upon things African. This will be seen later in the thesis.

The Gospel came to Africa on a tidal wave of Western cultural expansion. In the minds of many - both those who felt the tide coming and those who were part of it - not much distinction was made between Christianity and the culture of the Western missionaries who brought the Gospel. Consequently Christianity in Africa became very closely identified with particular cultural form - that of the Western white man. This tidal wave has reached its peak - causing the majority of African nations to assert their independence from Colonial rule.

Kwesi Dickson, an Effutu born, a Methodist minister, and a prominent Ghanaian scholar and theologian speaks eloquently of the current situation. He maintains that it is an indisputable fact that the Christian churches have made great achievements yet their attitude towards traditional beliefs and practices has given way to the numerous independent and so-called "spiritual churches" which attract more attention.¹⁰⁰

This is because the latter's attitude towards traditional beliefs is consonant with their sentimental nature and naive dispositions or practices.

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Runyon op. cit. pp. 194 - 196.

Though the candidates selected for training as ministers of the (missionary) church were Ghanaians,¹⁰¹ the ministry that emerged was not, strictly speaking, indigenous,¹⁰² since the aim of the training was to make the Ghanaian minister as much as possible a copy of the English missionary.¹⁰³ There was the tendency to propagate the Christian message of new life effectively enough to produce converts who would separate themselves from their "undesirable" traditional life. The result was that there was a removal of the converts to new quarters where they could live and mature in their faith, or they were to be in a dual kind of existence - one Christian and the other traditional. "Contradictions such as these have not been unknown in all denominational histories, to be ... sure".¹⁰⁴

In Ghana the rules of the Churches in respect of burial and funeral rites are creating many problems especially where traditional beliefs and practices are deeply rooted among the natives. For the purposes of this thesis, therefore, the most outstanding theological contradictions which have created tensions between the Church and traditional religion will be discussed. To do this properly requires a review of traditional Effutu and Christian views.

¹⁰¹ For an assessment of local ministerial and catechist training in the Protestant Churches in Ghana, refer J.K. Agboti, 'The History of the Training of African Christian Ministers in Ghana, 1942-1965'. Ph.D. Thesis, London University, 1969.

¹⁰² See Kwesi Dickson, 'The Minister - then and Now', Religion in a Pluralistic Society, ed. by J.C. Pobee, Leiden, E.T. Brill, 1976, p. 29.

¹⁰³ Refer Trinity College Syllabus. As an old student of Trinity, the writer experienced the Western theological education. At the moment majority of the Trinity lecturers are Africans. Yet they are all Westernly orientated theologically. It will take some time before true African Theology could be realized in Trinity.

¹⁰⁴ Runyon op. cit. p. 195.

CHAPTER II

DEATH IN THE TRADITIONAL EFFUTU AND CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING.

Certain concepts associated with the traditional structure of the Effutu people in relation to the wider Akan society in Ghana have been described in the previous Chapter. The development and the impact of Christianity on the traditional Effutu have also been discussed. The present-day Effutu Christians are conscious both of the existence of their traditional religious concepts and of the fact that Christianity as brought to them by the Western missionaries has been a blow to their traditional beliefs and practices especially those about death and the dead. For the Effutu people traditional religious action represents an ideal, which is shared by all Effutu and as such, is a unifying factor. Wherever they are, and whatever their social and religious position may be, they all accept the picture of the organisation of old Effutu implied by these beliefs, and believe that it should in some way be the framework for their lives.

This chapter therefore, is principally concerned with the traditional Effutu and the contemporary Christian understanding of death and the attitudes to death which follow.

By way of preamble, it is worth remarking that although many prefer to avoid the subject of death altogether, one's belief about life after death¹ affects one's attitudes to death.²

¹ See also Peter Sarpong, 'Some Sociological Reflections on Death', The Ghana Bulletin of Theology, V. 3, No. 9, December, 1970, p. 2.

² See J. S. Pobee, 'Funerals in Ghana', The Ghana Bulletin of Theology, V. 4, No. 5, December, 1973, p. 20.

Let us now turn to the Effutu concept of and attitude to death.

Origin of Death

The Effutu, like any tribe, have a story to tell to explain every phenomenon. To them the origin or cause of death is accounted for in the following manner. Long ago men were happy, for God dwelt among them and talked with them face to face. However these happy days did not last forever (for presumably at this time men were immortal). One unlucky day it happened that some women were pounding a mash with pestles in a mortar, while God stood looking on. For some reason they were annoyed by the presence of the deity and told him to be off; and as he did not take himself off fast enough to please them, they beat him with their pestles. God therefore retired altogether from the world and left it to the direction of the fetishes; and still to this day ^e people say "Ah, if it had not been for the old women, how happy we would be!" However, from heaven God sent a message by a goat to men upon earth saying: "God sends you word that you will die and that will be an end of you". So off the goat set with this message. But God seeing the goat loitering by the way, and eating ntanta,³ sent off a sheep with the same message to men. But the sheep did not deliver the message aright. He said, "The long suffering God sends you a good tidings. The message is: There is something called death. He will kill some of you. But even if you die you will not perish completely.

³ Ntanta is a kind of fruit found in the bushes of the Effutu. This is especially found at the bush where they hunt for deer.

X You will come to me in heaven". Afterwards the goat arrived on the scene and said: "God sends you word that you will die, certainly, but that will be the end of you". But men said to the goat, "No, goat, that is not what God said. We believe that the message which the sheep brought us is the one which God sent to us". This story tells the origin of death among men according to the Effutu people.⁴

It should be borne in mind that this story should not be taken literally. The founders of the Effutu society were people who were fond of story telling and with their 'mythical mentality' were able to reflect on their own-existence, their explanations of their experiences in terms of the supposed origins of those experiences and the part played by the supernatural, the god or gods, who as likely as not behave just as men behave. The Effutu ancestors, therefore, formulated the origin or cause of death in story form. Their concept of the origin of death therefore is non-historical. Though the Effutu ancestors were people who thought of God as remote, yet it was He that they approached when all else failed; it was He whose power they considered as greater than all other power. God therefore could not have been treated in the way that the story portrays, though the story had its ethical meaning.

⁴ This was obtained from oral historians like Opanyin Kow Mensah, Opanyin Enyinda and Opanyin Kwesi Atta - all of Winneba during the writer's field work in May, 1985, cf. also G. H. Anderson (ed) The Theology of the Christian Mission, McGraw-Hill, Book Company Inc, 1961 pp. 38-51. For another interesting account of origin of death among some Akan societies see S. Asante Antwi, A Study in the Transformation and Continuity of Akan Religious Ritual and Ceremony in Gomaa, Central Ghana. Ph.D. thesis, Aberdeen University, 1980 pp.77-81.

Here we see that the Effutu ancestors were saying that both sin⁵ and death are inseparably part of human nature. Moreover it is hardly conceivable for one to think of goat and sheep to be the messengers of God and men. Here too, what the Effutu ancestors wanted to say was that on his own volition God, (Nyimpo) could use whatever was at His disposal for His purpose and that even death has a purpose.

Human life, for the Effutu people, as for all human beings, revolves round four major events - birth, puberty, marriage and death.⁶ These are crises which affect not only an individual Effutu but the whole family and its neighbours and friends.⁷

⁵ The Effutu concept of sin is explained by saying because of the weakness of the moral element in the Effutu conceptions of both men and God, there is no real counterpart of the Christian doctrines of sin and salvation. Gods or ancestors might be offended, and pacification offering might be made to them in much the way as to an offended human. For example, if there is an adultery, the man offers a pacification fee and there and then the matter ends. To the Effutus, both sin and punishment, the act of appeasement and the consequences of that act, are essentially outward acts or events.

⁶ While to the Effutu people death is one of the four major events around which life revolves, some tribes in Africa and especially in Nigeria for instance, regard death a person, the subject of myths; and is even seen in human form at times of crises, by those who have supernatural eyes. Refer Idowu, E. B. Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief, London, Longmans, 1966 p. 86. To this may be added P. R. McKenzie, Inter-religious Encounters in West Africa, (Leicester studies in Religion) Leicester, 1976, p. 30.

⁷ cf. Jomo Kenyatta, Facing Mount Kenya, Nairobi: Heinemann Educational Books, 1971, p. 234.

The Effutu people call death, déwu.⁸ To the Effutu déwu is less than negation of life. It is not life's contradiction or negation but an instrument of the higher consummation, a planting or fruition of it. There is also an obvious resemblance between death and sleep among Effutu people. To these people, déwu is very much like sleep so they say ominiwua yee nde/Nnyim wu a hwe nda⁹ ("if you don't know what death is, look at sleep"). They believe that déwu and sleep are twin brothers ntawó, children of night. They as well think of death as indeed a journey home, (muó sukyi pa wo ewusó).¹⁰

According to Nana Ayirebi Acquah IV¹¹ the life of an Effutu is a life trained how to die. To the Effutu what is important to preserve is the memory of the deeds of the dead embodied either in immortal words or in achievement.¹²

⁸ Déwu in Fante is Owu. But both words are used by the Effutu people. For instance Effutu say (munwu) - he is dead.

⁹ Some of these proverbial sayings are evident in the writings of students on Akan social anthropology such as Fortes, Busia, Christensen and Rattray, to mention only a few. See for example, J. B. Christensen, 'The Role of Proverbs in Fante Culture', Africa XXVII 1958, pp. 232-243; R. S. Rattray, 'The African child in Proverbs, Folklore and Fact', Africa. VI, 1933, pp. 456-471. Here it should be mention that Rattray's work is a translation of some 800 of the 3600 Akan proverbs appearing in the work of J. G. Christaller and David Asante entitled, Twi Mnebussem Apensa-Ahasia, Basel, 1879. This shows the universality or similarity among the Akan of a larger number of proverbs, although many are localised.

¹⁰ For the effect of death on the natural body see Chapter 3. The Effutu also believe that the human species is the only one which knows it will die, and it knows this through experience. The Effutu also believe that unlike the lower animals, the only animal who has a clear awareness of death and regards death as universal and inevitable phenomenon is man. The Effutu believe that unlike human beings, an animal at death means its whole life is finished with. It has become decomposed hence part of the soil, a manure.

¹¹ Nana Ayirebi Acquah IV is the Omanhene, King of the Effutu Traditional Area. Before his enstoolment in 1977 he was an educationist. Interview with him was very stimulating.

¹² See Chapter 5 for more discussion.

(Déwú) is a subject the Effutu do not care to speak about. They think more of the prospect of a life beyond the grave till the thought of it reaches a passion, almost becoming an obsession, breeding a contempt for the fleeting joys of this ephemeral existence by comparison with the hoped - for bliss of an eternal existence hereafter. Reinforcing this familiarity with spirit world, Nyimpo Ye, the palace of God is the belief in its attractive side, its good lovely abode of breezes (éfu) to which all 'souls' could look forward. This is the main reason why the Effutu funeral rites aim to procure for the person who has lost his life access to a new state of social existence, to transform the absence of the (Wumandé) or (Osama)¹³ lost person into a more or less stable positive social status, that of 'one of the living dead'. Furthermore, it is seen in their poems that praises, indefinitely repeated, which ensure for a small minority of the chosen - who thus stand out from the ordinary mass of the osama (deceased), defined as the crowd of 'nameless ones' - the permanence of their name, their fame and the achievements (mbodenbo) they have accomplished. In this way, an individual who has ceased to be is transformed into a figure whose presence, as one of the 'living dead' is forever a part of the existence of the family, ebusua.

¹³ The Effutu call a dead person either wumandé or osama. Wu = death, mande = don't sleep. Osa = person, mma = not with you anymore. We shall use both words interchangeably.

The Effutu people believe that (déwu) is the concern of all and that for an individual who lives for himself alone, (déwu) is a tragic fact, much to be detested not for its consequences, but in itself, a thing undesired for its own sake. In Danquah's¹⁴ words: "such selfish persons must suffer the greatest mental anguish in cogitating upon their own inevitable annihilation from this earth through death. For such there is no need for philosophy, for ... them the postulate of mind is a wasted effort. Death is their reality". On the other hand to the 'race-conscious individual' death is nothing but a stage in the consciousness of the race, the experience of his kind.¹⁵ Danquah goes on to say that with this 'race-conscious' person the primary fact is that within him is an inheritance, the blood of his race and from him must go that inheritable treasure to other descendants, the blood of his own body. For such a person, death, owu is only an aspect of birth, awo, an instrument of the total destiny the continuity of the kind, the permanence and persistence of the organic whole which is the greatest good of endeavour.¹⁶

¹⁴ Refer Danquah, op. cit. p. 157.

¹⁵ Ibid. p. 158.

¹⁶ Ibid. p. 159.

With regard to such people J. A. Thompson,¹⁷ speaking on the purely biological level, maintains "that death may seem like a surplus of income over expenditure, for it means merely one of the primal conditions of organic growth", for "there is no aloofness in the realm of organisms, nothing lives or dies of itself Animate nature", he goes on "is characteristically a system - a fabric that changes in pattern and yet endures. Though the individual threads of the web are always dying they are replaced without discontinuity".¹⁸ There is a belief among Effutu people that energy has primacy over matter. It precedes, controls and survives material forms. The energy or force of the (wumandé) does not perish with him, but passes into a new manifestations.¹⁹

Linked with this principle is that of the 'flux of forms'. One form flows easily into another, none has rigidity or real separateness, for all are simply stages in the eternal flow of the same energy.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ This was obtained from the elders and the subchiefs of Nsuekyir, Gyahadze and Ateitu, during the writer's field work in February, 1985. These elders and subchiefs were highly esteemed for their oral history and intelligence. They have great mine of knowledge of the Effutu.

The same conception applies to the relationship of past, present, and the future, which all exist simultaneously in the continuum of space-time; and to the relationship of dead, living and unborn. Seen in this perspective, (déwù) death is almost an occasion for rejoicing²⁰ since it guarantees the continuing process of renewal. This renewal is what the Effutu call (tum) mana. A man is a good fighter not because of his own strength or resources but because of the strength he gets from the tum, of his dead ancestor who was a fighter. (Déwù), death feeds life and makes renewal possible. There is a tender, enigmatic expression of this in the Effutu funeral song:

"Mobo beeni sa
Kome keyem ye medaa asoto
" " " " tesi so
" " " " mo ewo so
Nwa yea meka nsutsen so
Mohu nsuten mo olefe na owi mo elefe
Mohu oma ko kye mba yibi pii yiregyoo so.
Nana moso mba pii
Ka sisim mbe yibim no fo wu".²¹

²⁰ Unlike the Effutu, some Akan tribes, like the Gomoa tribe regard death as evil, since the cause of death's appearing to a given person is usually seen as malefic and unnatural; in many cases the agency being ascertained through divination as witchcraft or sorcery. Refer also Morton-William, P. 'Yoruba Responses to the Fear of Death', Africa, Vol. XXX, 1960, pp. 34-40. To this may be added Sarpong, op.cit. p. 2.

²¹ Okyerema Annobil (Chief drummer of Winneba), explains that this is one of the most important songs played during death of Asafo members. It is believed among the Effutu people that only without this fulfilment is déwù sad and defeating. Here the acoli sing of a man who dies without male issues: "My brother has died without his head". And also masqueraders sing: "Only the one who is buried by his child is the one who has truly borne a child" see also Gerald Moore, 'The Imagery of Death in African Poetry', Africa XXXVIII, 1969, p. 63.

Which literally means in English as follows:

"I had three friends
One asked me to sleep on the ground
One asked me to sleep on a mat
One asked me to sleep on his breast
I decided to sleep on his breast
I saw myself carried on a river,
I saw the King of the river and the King of the sun.
There is that country I saw palm trees
So weighed down with fruit,
And the fruit killed them".

Here is fulfilment, when the oldman bends and eventually dies under the weight of his own offspring.

The Effutu, believe that there is a flow of energy through the world. Life itself is thought of as ephemeral. Hence, as in neo-Platonic thought, death not only leads to the renewal of life, but is itself a restoration of original purity.²² In another poem the Effutu see that the whole course of life (obra) as a kind of 'parachute' jump out of eternity. Living is a continual passage from one state of being to another. In this sense men are always jumping, always falling, always arriving: The Effutus say:

Furkyi ediampa na osa fona
Ana abowi to bo dede
Kye se ekokwakwa wo nta
Yohu annba.

Se ofi onnso awerefir to begyira ase a
Mennye a nna ombe wa' ana to
Asoto ma paako afa ma'wo
Owu na alawora annye so²³

²² See Chapter III on Effutus' concept of the body and Chapter V on the ancestors.

²³ The Effutus have numerous poems of this kind. They have poems for every event.

Which literally means in English as follows:

The first jump takes the breadth away.
Feet in the air disturbs
Till you get used to it.

The violent landing
Puts out the joint
Earth has nowhere to go
You are at the starting point

Considering those poems one at once sees that in practice there is no attempt to soften the sharp pain of loss for the bereaved ebusua. Though in a philosophical sense one's energy is not lost to the ebusua, he still remains a part of the human community. Nevertheless the living man himself is gone as an individual. Yet (déwu) death is the occasion the Effutu praise the departed, and in traditional Effutu, the concept of praise often includes the enumeration of the dead one's faults and failures as well as his virtues.

Death and Reincarnation

Unlike some Akan, the Effutu people are not keen on reincarnational destiny, though Dr. J. B. Danquah assumes that in Akan thought, a man is born with a destiny which is to be fulfilled by means of successive reincarnation. What Danquah is implying is that a newly born child could start from where his dead relative left off. Here it could be argued that the relationship between the destiny of the newly born individual and that of his ancestors is difficult to determine. We see that Danquah's presentation makes this even more difficult.

~~Because~~ For him re-incarnation takes place only because the destiny of the reincarnate ancestor is as yet unfulfilled. The Effutu on the other hand assume that the (tum) mana that the deceased has imparted to the newly born baby is the vital force which makes him behave exactly as the ancestor.²⁴

Danquah describes this feature as "racial immortality".²⁵

What the writer maintains is that the newly born is not the reincarnate of the deceased ancestor who did not wholly fulfill his destiny, but very much an individual with his own 'destiny' different from the deceased ancestor.²⁶ As far as the Effutu people are concerned one could argue that Danquah is wrong, though Danquah was specifically speaking about Akan of which Effutu is a part. This indeed makes the Effutu people peculiar in their **thinking** of reincarnation from other Akan society.

Whenever an Effutu talks about death he also talks

²⁴ At Winneba, there is "The Life Corps Kindergarten School" built near the public cemetery. This is because the idea that the dead can impart (tum) mana, to people is strongly entertained in the people's minds. The Effutu believe that the 'living-dead' perhaps with high I.Qs. would impart intelligence to some of the pupils. The headmaster, Mr. Arkhurst, maintains **that** whether that belief is true or not it is wonderful how bright the pupils are.

²⁵ Refer Danquah, op. cit. p. 162.

²⁶ For an interesting account of similar belief. See also Placide Tempels, 'Bantu Philosophy' in Fresence Africaine, (Paris, 1959), p. 73, cf. p. 72

about immortality. Effutu people make no distinction between ancestor-reverence and memorialism. To the Effutu people behind the religious dictates concerning ancestorship in the palace of God, memorials (as for instance, naming of the newly born baby) to the dead have other and more mundane purposes, and in particular the preservation of the deceased's reputation. What the Effutu hope to achieve for the dead is perpetual remembrance, by strangers as well as by kin. The dead are now ancestors (they affect the lives of their dependants and are reincorporated into the ebusua to serve as focal points in the geneological definitions of social relationships) - (See chapter V). Furthermore, for the traditional Effutu death is indeed a journey home - Nyimpo Ye or the palace of God. The spirit-ancestors always remain in Nyimpo Ye to give support and protection to the one so-journing on earth.²⁷

Forms of Death

Nevertheless death remains death. Among the Effutu people there are five forms of death which are traditionally recognized. There are 1. Abodwewu - Death from natural causes, such as old age: 2. Nsramuwu - Death by violence, during a battle, a riot or a festival: 3. Anwobawu - Death of a childless woman or man: 4. Atofowu - Premature death: 5. Amumuwu - A woman's death during pregnancy or child-birth or in consequence of an abortion or still birth.²⁸

²⁷ For further belief among some West African tribe cf. also Bascom, W. 'Yoruba Concepts of the Soul' in A.F.C. Wallace (ed.), Men and Cultures: Selected Papers of the Fifth International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, Philadelphia, Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1960, pp. 406f.

²⁸ cf. E. L. Meyerowitch. op. cit. p. 112.

From the five types of death tabulated above, the Effutu people have two main understandings of death - good death and bad death.

The ideal of the 'good death' to them, is related to conceptions of virtue, but also to conceptions of the overall shape of one's existence - life and after life. To the Effutu a life can be judged when completed by its death. For them, to exist as an individual means to make oneself, and to remain, 'memorable'. The individual has escaped from anonymity, from oblivion from being wiped out - and so from death - by means of death itself. A death which by allowing the one access to glorification in song has made him even more present to the ebusua. In his status as a dead hero - as for instance; dying in battle and receiving the honour of public burial rites. The Effutu again consider death in old age a blessing and so they say, to die well is to die old. The dead person goes to God (Nyimpo) from whom he came. Life comes from God (Nyimpo) and to him it returns.

The Effutu also believe in a non-natural power which can bring about death and which is at the willing or unwilling disposal of certain people. This power they call, Ogyapa²⁹ 'witchcraft', that is, the idea of some specific supernatural power which possesses a person exclusively for evil and antisocial purposes. Therefore, one aspect of death which arouses especial interest is sudden or unnatural death. This understanding generates enmity between people since suspicion of sorcery or witchcraft commonly accompanies a sudden death. But interestingly in the case of the death of the very

²⁹ Ogyapa means 'the fire within'. R. W. Willie, 'Introspective Witchcraft Among the Effutu of Southern Ghana' MAN, Vol. 8, No. 1, March, 1973, p. 75. The Effutu have also a concept of a good witchcraft: They believe at times that a very prosperous trader or fisherman has a witch which helps him or her to prosper, instead of killing people. At times too, according to (panyin Fow Enyinda; (a chief herbalist at Nsuekyir), some intelligent students at school are believed to be so because of the good witch of their parents. Notwithstanding, the overall belief is that witchcraft among the Effutu is abhorred. The people again use anyen also for witchcraft.

old the Effutu people show no concern at all to find whether it was the witch who was the cause of the death.

The attitude of the Church towards this particular issue of death by witchcraft³⁰ has naturally given rise to problems. The point is not that the Church has been guilty of giving the wrong answers to questions about death caused by the witch. It is that they have not been very adept at hearing the questions burning in the hearts of the Effutu converts and at going to the scriptures afresh for answers. The Church too often gives good answers to questions which the people never raise, and remains silent when their authentic questions emerge - especially concerning death by 'ogyapa'. What the Effutu converts, especially those who style themselves as Traditionalist, question is why the Church has adopted such a wooden attitude or does not care about this important issue.

According to his own lights the Effutu convert is a practical man and therefore seeks prompt protection from the real or imagined danger of the witches whose powers are inherited from parents - the father as well as the mother - and that the witch is active at night, when her spirit (sunsum) leaves her body as she sleeps. Witches, it is felt, usually have little or no control over their actions and wish to be rid of their powers.

³⁰ Such an idea about death and illness by witchcraft in Effutu thinking tallies with similar ideas in Evans-Pritchard's famous study of Zande witchcraft which is a classic work in exploring systematically a mode of explanation in which dual causation is a central feature in dealing with death and illness etc. in a primal society. Refer E. Evans-Pritchard, Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic Among the Azande, Oxford, 1937. See also H. Debrunner, Witchcraft in Ghana, 2nd edition, London, 1961. In Debrunner's study we see that he deals with some aspects of traditional religious beliefs and practices and the continuity in independent churches under the single title of 'Witchcraft! Although the work is interesting the title is ambiguous indeed. Refer also, Robin Horton, 'Africa Traditional Thought and Western Science' Africa XXXVII 1967, p. 60.

An Effutu folk may buy sabe,³¹ charms, from a muslim, he may become a devotee or a modern anti-witchcraft shrine, by chewing Tigare's³² kola.³³ Or else he may be attracted to the modern syncretistic African Christian Independent Churches fetching holy sand or holy water from Kozano near Anvinam, or joining the Apostolic Church. Thousands of Effutu christians leave the older denominations and go to these shrines and sects just because they seem to offer specific protection against the dreaded witches.³⁴ Put the

- ³¹ Thylacteries to which the virtue of amulet is attributed. Further indications of the presence of introspective witchcraft in West Africa are offered in studies of the new spiritual or "prophetic-healing" sect whose leaders perform witch-cleansing functions for persons - mainly women - who confess to involuntary witchcraft activity - Baeta, 1962; Geoffrey Parrinder, Religion in an African City, London: Oxford University Press, 1953; K. J. Field, Search for Security, London, Faber & Faber, 1969; H. W. Turner, History of An African Independent Church, 2 Vols. London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967; H. Debrunner, Witchcraft in Ghana, Kumasi Presbyterian Book Depot, 1959. It is this notion of involuntary witchcraft activity which makes self accusation and confession a less shameful experience than might otherwise be the case. Willie, op. cit. p. 75.
- ³² There are about 135 Tigare shrines in Effutu Traditional Area. Their purpose is to heal people who are believed to be in the grips of the witches.
- ³³ Kola is a stimulant fruit which some people chew with some herbs. The juice of kola is very reddish. This is found only in the tropics.
- ³⁴ During field work on March 20, 1965, the writer had a privilege of witnessing a man believed to be a witch at Sankor. He had been brought to Tigare shrine to be healed. He was charged to have taken an unborn child from his pregnant sister. Interviewing the okomfo (the fetish), the witch would die within three days if he could not confess. This witch was believed to be a christian. However the man died out of perhaps pneumonia. The Okomfo, when asked what he thought about the leaders of the new prophetic-healing sects, ventured the opinion that 'they must be witches - no one can heal people the way they say they do, without herbs or medicines unless they are witches'. See also Willie, op. cit. p. 79. f.n.

intriguing point is whether there is any reality at the bottom of witchcraft. The answer to this and only correct answer, can disclose the common factor.³⁵ One can take one's stand on the principle that witchcraft cannot kill. At the same time, equally strongly, one must insist that the belief in sorcery³⁶ is psychologically effective. On the one hand it undermines the vitality of the victim. It hampers his action; and so ultimately may contribute to his death.³⁷ The whole modern psychiatric approach, Coue, faith healing, Christian Science in so far as they have any element of therapeutic effectiveness, prove that the mental state of the patient, is of the greatest importance.³⁸ Allow the sick man to feel that his sickness is being manufactured, give a man the belief that a run of ill luck has been started against him, and he may succumb.

³⁵ Refer also Bronislaw Malinowski, The Dynamics of Culture Change. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press 1947, p. 95.

³⁶ E. G. Parrinder maintained that West African beliefs distinguish between witchcraft and sorcery. The sorcerer (cheyiwo) may be consulted for harmful purposes, whereas the witch may not. In a theoretical way Parrinder's assertion may be correct, but we intend to use both witchcraft and sorcery in our context to denote the same activities. The words will therefore be used interchangeably. See E. G. Parrinder, African Traditional Religion, 3rd edition, 1974, p. 123.

³⁷ Refer also Malinowski, op. cit. p. 96.

³⁸ Ibid. p. 95.

But even this explanation points only to the effects of the belief and not to the psychological, social and economic foundations of its persistence. Witchcraft (ogyapa) is not primarily founded on the aggressive malices of the sorcerer, who wishes to do harm and who blackmails his victims into the belief in it. The sorcerer is often the unwilling, sometimes the victim. Witchcraft (ogyapa) is primarily rooted in the psychological reactions of those suffering from ill health, misfortune, or simply inability to control their destiny and fortune. As such, it is a translation of destiny and of personal mishap due to the rulings of fate, into terms of manageable human malice. It is thus "a theory constructed post hoc, to account for ill luck, disease and death".³⁹ It is an agency in which the initiative, the illwill, and the active procedure are imputed to definite human beings. As such death is regarded as evil, since the cause of death's appearing to a given person was usually seen as malefic and unnatural; in many cases the agency being ascertained through divination as witchcraft or sorcery. There was a case which was reported by Methodist catechist at one of the Effutu towns. He reported a typical instance of a christian man's death being attributed to his wife's witchcraft, a crime for which she paid for her life.⁴⁰

³⁹ Ibid. p. 96.

⁴⁰ It was reported that the woman was beaten to death. The government penalised those involved for taking the law into their own hands. The catechist who wanted to appear anonymous maintained further that those labelled as witches were sometimes either hooted at or beaten or both.

Relief in witchcraft (ogyapa) among the Effutu converts will always remain a symptom of economic distress, of social tension, of political or social oppression. We have only to look at the then conditions in Europe. We would then see how the scape-goat psychology gave rise to attitudes and actions essentially akin to witch hunting:⁴¹ the persecution of Jews in Germany; saboteurs, spies, and Trotskyites in Russia; and of liberals and anti-fascists in Italy. Such a psychological phenomenon is universally human and persistent: in other words the concentration of blame and hatred on certain clearly defined groups suspected of causing evils for which one otherwise would have to blame all the members of the community; its government, the decrees of destiny, or other elements against which immediate reaction is not possible.

Witchcraft is abhorred by the Effutu. It is proscribed by the Church on the grounds that (1) it is caused mainly by the imagination of the sufferer or (2) by the malicious self-projection of the witch or (3) by a definite possession of an external supernatural agency, as for instance demons.⁴²

⁴¹ Unlike other Akan there appears to have been no traditional witch hunting in Effutu of the sort as described by Debrunner, see Debrunner, Ibid.

⁴² See Christianity and African Culture op. cit. p. 69.

Notwithstanding the fact that witchcraft has been driven from open recognition, it is practised in a clandestine manner apparently to an even larger extent than in the last three or four decades. It has been cogently argued by Marwick, Mitchell, and Swartz⁴³ that witchcraft accusations decline in Africa urban areas, primarily because social relations become more fragmented and increasingly involve 'strangers', between whom hostility can be expressed openly (and even by means of social separation) rather than mystically, as in witchcraft accusations. No doubt this is true, but it would be unwise to assume that all expressions of witch belief decline in urban situations. In Effutu Traditional Area, it is reported to flourish in the villages, the urban and rural locations, plantations, fishing and even mission stations. In Effutu, both men and women are sometimes accused of being ogyapa or obeyivo that is witches or sorcerers respectively, who are supposed to devise⁵ evil deeds. It is also believed that witches are usually women. They are often old women who are believed to rejuvenate themselves with 'soul' of young children, or women or young women and men within the same ebusua; as a result of tension between mothers and daughters - in-law or co-wives and barren or physically deformed women and social misfits.⁴⁴ In devising

⁴³ M. G. Marwick, (ed.) Witchcraft and Sorcery, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970, pp. 379-81; J. C. Mitchell, The Yao Village, Manchester; University Press, 1965, pp. 201-2; E. J. Swartz, 'Interpersonal tensions, modern conditions, and changes in the frequency of witchcraft/Sorcery accusations' Africa Urban Notes, 4, 1969, pp. 25-33. Willie op. cit. p. 78.

⁴⁴ See F. M. Douglas, Natural Symbols, London, 1973, pp. 130, 137 who argues that the stronger the social pressures, the more subdued the weaker section becomes and the more magicality in ritual and in the definition of sin, the greater incidence of witchcraft accusation.

orders, as for instance the Methodist Church⁴⁵ in order to rid the Effutu of the scourge, the Methodist Church proceeded without an adequate knowledge of the facts or an intelligent handling or principles. A state of mind which is deeply rooted and founded, not in accidental superstition but in universal human psychology, cannot be abolished by legislation. It cannot be eradicated by mere non recognition and denial of its existence.

The christian missionary is tempted both to underrate and exaggerate the belief. As a skeptic enlightened and christian having trust^{ed} in Christ and also that christians are in the hands of God and have the Holy Spirit living in them he discounts its possibility. In this he is undoubtedly correct. As a benevolent and paternal ruler, he cannot help being impressed by the strength of the primitive belief; by the blackmail element in it, and by the unhappiness which it causes, the hate and resentment which go with it. Hence he is moved by the conviction that it is a figment and by the realization that it is a dangerous figment.

In Africa, culture change produces on the whole, conditions of economic distress, political unrest, and personal conflicts. No wonder therefore that the belief in death by witchcraft increases rather than abates among, especially, the Effutu people.

The Church is therefore being called upon to reconsider her attitude towards this haunting problem in the Effutus' mind.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ See Leaders Meeting Minutes Book, Meeting held on 27th March, 1964, section on 'Funerals'. At this meeting it was agreed that a prayer group should be formed purposely for exorcising evil spirits. It was also agreed that some people were falsely charged as witches. ~~To date~~ no serious attention has been paid by the church to witchcraft.

⁴⁶ See Chapter 6 for suggested Church's strategy.

We have so far seen the Effutu concept of death and their attitude to death. We have also seen what they consider to be one of the causes of death - witchcraft and the Church's attitude to this frightening agency. What we are now going to discuss is the contemporary christian⁴⁷ understanding of death.

The Contemporary Christian Understanding

In order to understand the contemporary christians' concept of and attitudes to death, it is necessary first to understand the historical roots of the christian tradition as well as the biblical evidence.

The Christian traditional theory of the fall as found in Genesis 3 tells a story of the first man and woman of the human race.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Any understanding of death as found in the churches teaching and liturgy was brought by the western missionaries hence the term contemporary christian understanding.

⁴⁸ Contrary to the christian tradition, Gen. 3 is not a story of "How death came into the world", nor is it simply concerned with what happened long ago, "once upon a time". It does not say a word to the effect that then man lost his immortality, Gen. 3 shares the belief of the whole Old Testament that man is created mortal. But after having broken away from the God-given fellowship, man is now addressed for the first time as a mortal being. Prior to the fall he did not think of death, now every thing is under the sign of death. E. Jacob, The Interpretation Dictionary of the Bible, I, 1962, p. 803, cp. also Th. Vrienzon, The Religion of Israel, E.T. 2nd impr. 1969, p. 48. See also H. W. Hupprebauer, 'Death' an Old Testament View, The Ghana Bulletin of Theology, v. 3. No. 9. December, 1970, p. 10. For C.T. view of death see A. R. Johnson, The Vitality of the Individual in The Thought of Ancient Israel, 1949, p. 107; J. Pedersen, Israel, its Life and Culture, 1-11, 1959, p. 99; R. de Vaux, Ancient Israel, 2nd ed. 1968, p. 56; H. H. Rowley, The Faith of Israel, 1961, p. 154. To this may be added R. Martin-Achard, in Biblisch - Historisches Handwörterbuch, 111, 1966, col. 1999f; E. Noth, The Old Testament World, E.T. 1966, p. 170; G. Von Rad, in Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, v. 11. p. 846.

These, through their disobedience to a divine order, forfeited paradisaical and ideal existence in which they had first been constituted by their Creator. They were therefore reduced to the actual human estate with all its physical and social shortcomings. Speculation on the scriptural data led to a persuasion of Christian theology that by the sin of Christians' first parents' the human race had been deprived of immortality, innocence, preternatural knowledge, etc., and that this deprivation together with, in some sense, the sinfulness attaching to this 'original sin' had been transmitted to every subsequent generation of mankind ('in Adam's sin, sinned we all'). The 'one man' through whom death and sin entered the world was Adam and it was through the 'one man' Christ that redemption has come to all with his 'type' (Rom. 5/12-21).⁴⁹

Critical interpretation of the Bible leads to other conclusions. Whether this condition of human sinfulness implied personal guilt on the part of each individual or merely the sharing of a defectible and deprived human nature was a matter for debate in early patristic theology. Similarly, latter theology has been divided over the issue of the extent to which original

⁴⁹ J. S. Fobee, 'Death in the New Testament', The Ghana Bulletin of Theology, V. 3, No. 9, 1970, p. 26.

sin has affected human nature. Augustine,⁵⁰ followed generally by the early Reformers, taught that the essence of original sin lay in concupiscence. In its extreme form this view led to a concept of wholly corrupt human nature bereft of free will. Thomas Aquinas' interpretation reduced mankind to the state of pure nature, leaving mind and will intact, but depriving him of the preternatural gifts without which he cannot attain the supernatural destiny intended for him by God. In this view too personal sinfulness is inevitable, not from a lack of free will but from the lack of divine grace.

The christian traditional theory of the fall (i.e. that by the sin of Adam death came into the world) far from being an illustrative story with man's primal sin and fall, and not like a reporter's first hand account, but a dramatic picture, imaginative in detail and profound in its insight and the character of the relation between man and God, simply renders death coming into the world through Adam's sin incomprehensible. It fails therefore as a theological conception.

Yet the relevance of the story of men in all ages is clearly seen by the fact that Adam is simply the Hebrew word for mankind.⁵¹ There is therefore, no man or woman living about whom

⁵⁰ St. Augustine, The City of God, New York: Random House. The Modern Library, 1950 XIV, 13 see also Belgic Confession Art XV; cf. Reinhold Niebuhr, The Nature and Destiny of Man, Vol. 1 New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948, p. 261; Emil Brunner, Man in Revolt trans. by Olive Wyon, Philadelphia: The Westminster Press 1947, pp. 121-123. cf. William Osborne Greenwood, Biology and Christian Belief, New York: The Macmillan Co., 1939, pp. 128-146; Sherley C. Guthrie, Jr. Christian Doctrine, Atlanta, John Knox Press, 1978, pp. 214-215; E. Clenton Gardiner, Biblical Faith and Social Ethics, New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1960, pp. 276-279.

⁵¹ Kwesi Dickson, in African Theology en Route, p. 217.

this story is not a true story. In inference, death is intimately part of mankind⁵² as finite beings.

As regards the Hebrew background concerning death, the Old Testament tradition has it that there was a clear connection between sin and death.⁵³ This was because in the presence of the perfection of God sin had no place at all.⁵⁴ It was also clear, however, that God took no pleasure in the death even of the wicked - sin and death were evil and had no place in the ultimate purpose of God which could only be good.⁵⁵ Though admittedly Yahweh's sphere of authority in no way ended at the boundaries of

⁵² Eberhard Jungel, Death, Edinburgh. St. Andrews Press, 1975, p. 7. See also F. Sarpong 'Some Sociological Reflections on Death', The Ghana Bulletin of Theology, V.3, No. 9. December, 1970, p. 1.

⁵³ Huppenbauer, op. cit. p. 15. See also Sarpong, op. cit. p. 2.

⁵⁴ To accept God's covenant and live in it means life, to reject it is death. This means that Israel was interested in death not so much as a biological phenomenon but as a religious phenomenon. The question was: did you find yourself in the presence of God? Seen from this point of view death in its biological form was a secondary matter. Moreover, "death" could be understood symbolically, pointing to ... sin and other "negative" conditions of life. Huppenbauer op. cit. p. 12.

⁵⁵ "The complaint that the dead are excluded from the praise of Yahweh leads us to the very heart of the dominant view", that the dead cannot worship together with the people of God. G. V. Rad op. cit. p. 847.

the realm death, yet the dead were thought to be outside the life providing sphere of the cult and therefore outside the covenant of Yahweh. This was what actually constituted their being dead. And for Israel death's bitterness lay in this exclusion.⁵⁶

The human spirit was thought of as having its own eternal identity. Therefore death was not regarded as the end, as a final dissolution of living things. Rather, death was seen as a joining of the departed souls in the underworld (Sheol). When a man died, he was gathered to his forefathers and dwelt with them in Sheol, which was a vague, meaningless place in which one resided, cut off both from the presence of Yahweh (see Ps. 88/5,6, 10-12) and from the land of the living.⁵⁷

Later Old Testament passages speak about death and life after death in ways more real than existence in sheol. (This will be discussed fully in Chapter 3). Isaiah 26/19 and Daniel 12/2 suggest that the righteous dead shall share in the coming deliverance and the unrighteous will live in shame and everlasting contempt.

We have seen what the Old Testament has to say about death. Now let us hear the New Testament evidence about death.

Before we hear the modern christians' voices concerning the concept of and attitude to death we must also hear what Jesus had to say⁵⁸ on this subject - death.

⁵⁶ Huppenbauer, op. cit. p. 14.

⁵⁷ Vriezen, Religion p. 48 notes the difference to the Egyptian outlook. Huppenbauer, op. cit. p. 11.

⁵⁸ Russell Aldwindkle, Death In the Secular City. London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1972, p. 47.

This is because for the Christian, his theology of death will be determined by the New Testament and the light shed upon this issue by the Gospel. Historically speaking, Christians are those who confess that Jesus is Lord and therefore accept his authority. The New Testament evidence is therefore decisive.

Unlike the Old Testament's point of view and understanding of death, one sees a wind of change in the New Testament. The crux of this wind of change is found in the teaching and preaching of Jesus concerning the Kingdom of God. The good news of the gospel as the Christians understood it was that Jesus proclaimed the fact that God was beginning to bring to fruition his original intention in his creation.⁵⁹ The Kingdom is something called into being by God and not man. It is not a utopia nor a new social order; and is not a mere disposition in men's heart.⁶⁰

In the Gospels Jesus says nothing about death as a physical phenomenon.⁶¹ In fact he makes no attempt to explain what death will be like nor answer the questions that have always excited man's curiosity. One finds references to stories that concern the raising of the dead. One sees therefore that the attitude of Jesus and the evangelists is in strong contrast with that found in Rabbinical writings.

⁵⁹ John Prickett, (ed.) Death, Guildford, London, Lutterworth Educational Press, 1980, p. 60.

⁶⁰ Ibid. p. 63.

⁶¹ Unlike what Jesus says death is used in the New Testament in two senses. There is firstly, biological or physical death like the death of Herod the Great in about 4 B.C. (Mt. 2/15) or the death of Jesus Christ (Mk. 15/37). But there is metaphorical use of the word e.g. Rom. 7/13; Jn. 8/51, 53 and 1 Jn. 5/16. Death in this sense is to be without God, to be in sin or to persist in sin (1k. 1/79; Mt. 4/16) Pobee, op. cit. p. 19.

Jesus makes no use of the conception of the 'angel of death',⁶² so characteristic of the latter, and traceable perhaps in language such as that of I. Cor. 10/36: Hebrew 2/14 and Rev. 20/13, 14. The current Jewish view that death was an evil persists in the Gospels but never became obtrusive.⁶³ One reads stories of Jesus raising the dead. But no prominence is given to such stories. In all the synoptic gospels, Jesus makes three points clear about death: first, He teaches that the willingness to endure death for His sake is the supreme test of faith (Lk. 14/36); second, death is the fixed limit appointed by God to all earthly pleasures, activities and sufferings; and third, death marks the beginning of the true and eternal life with God which cannot be terminated.⁶⁴ Thus, for the christian, there is no need to be over-anxious about the things of this world. Neither is there need to be fearful about the next.⁶⁵

The teachings of Jesus and the message of his resurrection had a very great impact on his disciples, particularly on Paul who had an optimistic approach to death. Paul vehemently believed that through Christ's death for him the consequence of sin has lost its sting, (1 Cor. 15/55-56).

⁶² There is no doubt that Israel too joined in the lament made by all religions and cultures over the bitterness of death. This is particularly the case when death is premature, when it occurs "in noontide of life" (Isa. 38/10), when life is not allowed to reach its full age and man is taken "in the midst of his days" (Ps. 102/24). Such death is likely to be taken as a punishment, meted out by a hostile power (originally Yahweh himself). In the cultures surrounding Israel death was a powerful deity, and this is still reflected in many texts of the Old Testament though often the destructive power is reduced to an angel in the service of Yahweh. Huppenbauer in The Ghana Bulletin of Theology, p. 13.

⁶³ Donald Guthrie, N.T. Theology, Leicester Inter-varsity Press, 1981, p. 822.

⁶⁴ Jungel op. cit. pp. 99-104.

⁶⁵ See also Pobee op. cit. p. 19.

This optimistic attitude and approach to death is based on the view that the entry of death into the world was caused by sin and that Christ has effectively dealt with the cause.⁶⁶ To Paul, death is no longer seen as an enemy to be feared, but rather as a point of transition to fuller life.⁶⁷ His own attitude bears this out. He lived under constant threats of death.⁶⁸ He can coolly debate whether life or death in Christ is preferable.⁶⁹ He exemplifies a man who has conquered all fear of death.⁷⁰ Indeed the resurrection of Jesus, for Paul, is the exemplification of death being conquered. There should be no fear of death. He therefore welcomes death as a gain (Phil. 1/21; Rom. 8/18f.).⁷¹ It would mean an increased apprehension of Christ. "The dying hour is the mere gateway into the 'large room' of the presence of Christ".⁷²

The idea behind this attitude is that "here is no continuing

⁶⁶ A. J. M. Wedderburn, "The Theological Structure of Romans V. 12" New Testament Studies XIX, 1973, p. 339-354, argues that the background is apocalyptic determinism which claimed that Adam was responsible for death. Guthrie, op. cit. p. 833.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ 1 Cor. 15/31, 11 Cor. 1/8, 11/23/f.

⁶⁹ Phil. 1/19 ff.

⁷⁰ K. Hannart 'Paul's hope in the Face of Death' Journal of Biblical Literature, LXXXVIII, 1969, pp. 445f. argues that Paul had no specific future expectation, but a radiant hope of eternal life.

⁷¹ The sentiment expressed here finds parallels in Greek Literature e.g. Plato Apology 40D; Jos. Bellum VII. 358; E. Lohmeyer, Die Briefe an die Philipper, an die Kolosser und an Philemon (1930), p. 57, n. 5. But there is a difference. While in Greek Literature the idea is that death is the true life, here in Philippians both life and death have a place of importance. Pobee op. cit. p. 24.

⁷² H. C. G. Moule, Philippians (1906), p. 24; M. C. Tenney, John (1954), p. 173.

city, here is no abiding stay".⁷³ Thus earthly life is only temporary and death leads to the presence of God which has always been the ultimate goal in history. This we may call the positive attitude to death. The most astonishing thing about it is that it stands to the fore in persecution situations. Martyrs after martyr dies joyfully because of the hope of fellowship with God. (e.g. Rev. 2:10). The truth is death is never read by itself; rather it is read against the background of the power, majesty, justice and love and purpose of the omnipotent God (Rev. 7:14-15; 11:15-18; 15:3-4).⁷⁴

Furthermore fairly common expression for death is sleep. For this several words are used Koimasthai (to sleep), Katheudein (to sleep), Koimesis (sleep - noun), and Hupsos (sleep - noun).⁷⁵ This expression had antecedents in the Old Testament as for example Daniel 12:2; "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth". This pictures death as a painless stillness (Job 3:13-22) and emphasises the peace aspect of death.⁷⁶ Indeed, there is an obvious resemblance between sleep and death.⁷⁷ However,

⁷³ T. S. Eliot, Murder in the Cathedral. But see also Rom. 8:18; Phil. 3:20; Heb. 13:14. Pobe op.cit. p. 24.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Koimesis occurs at Jn. 11:13. The verb koimasthai occurs eighteen times in the New Testament, of which fifteen refer unmistakably to death. Its use is widely spread Mt., John, Luke, Acts, 1 Cor., 1 Thess, 2 Peter, Katheudein is rather rare Eph. 5:14. Hupnos is also read - in fact at only Jn. 11:13; Rom. 13:11. Pobe op. cit. p. 22.

⁷⁶ C. R. Smith, The Bible and the Hereafter, (1958) pp. 42-45.

⁷⁷ Ecclus. 46:19; Test Reuben 3:1; 14:31. In the O.T. it tends to be used of natural death. Similarly in the classical world the same notion obtained e.g. Virgil, Aeneid VI . 278. "death and brother sleep".

there is an interesting phenomenon with regard to the use of the sleep metaphor. In New Testament, especially in the Paulines, the metaphor tends to be used of death of believers (1 Cor. 10:30; 15:18,20; Acts 7:60; John 11:12). This striking phenomenon is best explained on the hypothesis that to speak of death as sleep is to imply the Christian hope of the resurrection. Death is not 'finis' (1 Cor. 11:30; 1 Thess 4:13; Mt. 9:24 cf.; Mk. 5:22ff; John 11:11). Death is the interim, so to speak, between this temporary earthly life and the fuller and eternal life that awaits believers in the presence of Christ. Thus, if the New Testament uses the sleep metaphor, it is not a slavish take-over from Old Testament; the New Testament by it draws a contrast between the biological life which is temporary and the life eternal.⁷⁸

It is thought that in the early centuries of the Christian era, burial ceremonies were joyful affairs with relatives of the deceased and his Christian friends dressed in white. The reason was that it was believed that the person who had died had been released from his mortal flesh and the trials and tribulations of life, and was now at peace.⁷⁹

But as the centuries wore on and Christianity was accepted as the dominant religion in more and more countries in Europe, so the total commitment of the early Christian martyrs was watered down. As a result, the attitude to death and the hope in the after-life underwent a change.

⁷⁸ Pobe, op. cit. p. 22.

⁷⁹ The prayer offered could be found in the 'Prayer Book' of Serapion, Bishop of Thmuis about the middle of the fourth century. See John Wordsworth, Bishop Serapion's Prayer-Book, London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1923, p. 79.

There was no longer the certainty of resurrection - it all depended on God's judgement. The former glad confidence in the love of God gave place to an emphasis on God the just and terrible judge. So burial became an occasion for mourning, and the clothes of the relatives changed from white to black. This emphasis was dogmatised at the council of Trent (1545-1563).

Unlike the Catholic traditions that the purification takes place in purgatory, the Reformation replaced the contemporary fear of death with the impending judgement by a sense of hope in the loving forgiveness of God and the power of Christ's resurrection.⁸⁰

In order to understand more christian thought, it is worth recalling that in Pauline theology death is the consequence of sin. The difference between this idea and the Hellenistic identification of finiteness and sin is trenchantly expressed in the words of Augustine: "It is by sin that we die, and not by death that we sin",⁸¹ an exposition of Pauline words in Romans 5/12. "Thus sin came into the world by one man and death came in by sin". Among modern theologians the relationship between sin and death has been questioned.⁸² It is known today that whatever else a human being may be, he is a part of nature, an animal and also known that death held sway among the animals before man sinned.⁸³ Consequently it would appear that man dies because he is a finite creature and not because he is a sinner.⁸⁴

⁸⁰ Pricket, op. cit. p. 62. See also Pobee op. cit. p. 28.

⁸¹ Augustine Anti-Pelagian Works, Vol. 1. p. 150.

⁸² William Horden, 'Death' Dictionary of Christian Theology, ed. Alan Richardson, London SCM. Press Ltd., 1969, p. 88.

⁸³ Karl Rahner, 'Death', in Sacramentum Mundi, V. II, London, Burns and Oates, 1968, p. 63.

⁸⁴ Ibid. p. 63; Pobee op. cit. p. 23.

In short according to modern exegesis of the fall, man is not created immortal. Despite this modern understanding all contemporary theologians note that there is a deeper relationship between sin and death than appears on the surface. As Reinhold Niebuhr⁸⁵ points out, man fears death in a way that animals do not. In examining the New Testament treatment of death it becomes evident that it frequently speaks of the living as being dead in sin.⁸⁶ Thus Emil Brunner argues that the result of sin is not that men die but they die as they do with fear, agony and anxious uncertainty about what may lie on the other side of death.⁸⁷ Along the same line Niebuhr argues that the ideal possibility is that man, in perfect faith, would not fear death because of his assurance which is perfectly expressed in the Pauline confession: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? ..."⁸⁸ J. S. Pobee goes further to say that as Gen. 3:4f. and 2: 17f. as death is seen as the divine fiat for man's sin, a number of problems could be raised. He argues that it is difficult to see a metaphysical connexion between sin and death.⁸⁹ He maintains that, Paul, at any rate apparently treats Adam as a historical character and that this at once, raises a moral problem: how unfair of God to punish posterity with death when they themselves were not with Adam in his disobedience.⁹⁰ He argues that in any case, how far can it be

⁸⁵ Niebuhr, op. cit. pp. 51-52.

⁸⁶ e.g. Eph. 2/1.

⁸⁷ Emil Brunner, Dogmatic, Vol. III, Lutterworth, London, Westminster Press, 1962, pp. 383-84.

⁸⁸ Rom. 8/35, 38.

⁸⁹ Pobee op. cit. p. 26.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

maintained that Adam's sin marks the historic entry of death as a phenomenon in the world? Does not Paul himself say that there can be no sin before the giving of the law (Rom. 5:13)? Pobee maintains that, if so, how can sin be reckoned when the Torah was not as yet given.⁹¹ Here one could say that this may not be a strong argument. This is because there is a sense in which natural revelation constitutes a law. In any case God gives Adam specific instructions, e.g. a law.⁹² So Adam 'mythology' raises more problems than it seems to solve. "So how may the men of the twentieth century look at this mythology?"⁹³

There is some evidence that already in Judaism⁹⁴ they were refusing to take this story as historic entry of death as a phenomenon in the world. The linking of sin and death in Adam is a "description of humanity as it empirically is".⁹⁵ Consequently the historicity of Adam is really unimportant. In any case, literally speaking, on the day Adam ate the fruit he did not die. Furthermore, according to Gen. 3:22 man was created a mortal being. The conclusion is inevitable that just as Adam's disobedience brought about alienation from God (spiritual death,) so too death, especially when Israel had no hope of an after-life, meant alienation from God (Ps. 6:6; 30:10; Eccclus. 1:27ff). In so

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid. p. 27.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Apoc. Baruch 54:19 reads: "Adam is therefore, not the cause, save only of his own soul, but each one of us has been the Adam of his own soul" i.e. man's guilt and sin are not derived from Adam, but are due to his own action.

⁹⁵ C. K. Barrett, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 1961, pp. 141-142; O. Michael, Romerbrief, (1955) p. 122.

far as death, biological or spiritual is considered as in some sense alienation from God⁹⁶ it becomes an enemy. For the presence of God to the Jewish mind was a good per se (Ps. 51:11-12). As long as man sinned and thereby gets alienated from God, death becomes a great disaster, an enemy, How true this is! For no sinner views death with equanimity. This is the truth which the Adam "mythology" seeks to state.⁹⁷

The concept that the cause of death is sin had been developed by Karl Barth⁹⁸ and John Macquarrie. Barth and Macquarrie argue that as death can be seen in Christ's crucifixion, death also can be seen neither as natural nor as a result of God's good creation. The Bible sees death as an enemy to be dreaded.⁹⁹ This becomes more evident in the New Testament than in the Old Testament for it links death to the threat of hell, the final separation from God. It teaches that death is to be feared for it means the final facing of God in the knowledge that human beings are sinners. And yet, notes Barth, the whole Bible recognizes that God is the limit of death. It is God, not death, that Christians need to fear. Barth further argues that when Christ on his own volition accepted death, he took upon himself the full condemnation of sin, he revealed the full meaning of man's death under the judgement of God. But because Christ bore his death, Christians are delivered from the second death - the death that means ultimate separation from God. The Christian knows that

⁹⁶ In this connection it is perhaps, not without interest that Jesus on the Cross cried 'My God, why have you forsaken me' i.e. he had a sense of alienation from God. Pobee, op. cit. p. 27, f.n.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, Vol. 11 part II, Edinburgh, T and T Clark, 1957, pp. 558-559.

⁹⁹ 1 Cor. 15:26; cf. Pobee op. cit. p. 25.

he has died already with Christ, but he also knows that Christ arose so that the second death has been defeated. This means that the christian can now see his death which as a finite creature, he must still die, as no more than a symbol of what death would be without Christ. Furthermore, Barth argues that death and its power are not confined to human beings.

John Macquarrie,¹⁰⁰ who is very much influenced by Heidegger, argues that awareness of death is an immanent, a priori structure of human consciousness. Death becomes the eschaton, and as such it brings into existence a responsibility and seriousness that it could scarcely have otherwise. Death, in one sense destructive, is in other sense creative of unified responsible selfhood, the concerns of which become ordered in the face of the end. According to Macquarrie, death also becomes a criterion for judging men's concerns. Death exposes the superficiality and triviality of many of the ambitions and aspirations on which men spend their energies. Macquarrie, goes on to say that what is called 'everyday' existence is frequently the escape from responsibility, the covering up of death and finitude, the jumping from one immediate concern to the next without any thought that men's existence, as bounded, has the potentiality for some measure of unity and wholeness. According to Macquarrie, man "must be prepared to accept the factual aspects of his existence, his finitude, transience, and mortality, and take these up into the potentiality which he projects for himself into the future."¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ John Macquarrie, Systematic Theology, 2nd edition: New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1977, p. 78.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

This means in effect that by looking beyond ^hhimself, or, as it may be said, dying to himself, man becomes himself. "This is the paradox well known to the religious"¹⁰² and expressed in such sayings as that one must "die to live" and the "whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it."¹⁰³

Macquarrie further argues that there is profound truth in the thought of death as the consequence of sin, and that no one should take it as an arbitrary punishment awarded for sin, but rather as the working out of sin in existence and that to be human is to be given over to death so that existence itself becomes a 'being-toward-death'.¹⁰⁴ Macquarrie argues that Christ's self-giving love becomes complete and absolute in the accepting of the cross. Selfhood passes into Christhood, the human Jesus becomes the Christ of faith, and breaks out of the sin-bound human situation, and opens up the new life, symbolized by the resurrection. "Christ is the first fruits but the christian hope", argues Macquarrie, "is that in Christ God will bring all men to God-manhood."¹⁰⁵

Another way of getting at contemporary christian understanding of death is to see how it is reflected in funeral liturgies.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, p. 302

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, p. 303

Worship or "worth ship"¹⁰⁶ is the centre of the corporate life of the Church, and "is the attitude of acknowledging, whether in thought or deed, that a personality or object is worthy of one's respect. It involves homage of the mind, deference and admiration. This devotion soon places this person above all others. The Christian Church exists to show its devotion to Jesus Christ".¹⁰⁷ Christian worship, therefore, "is man's response to the revelation of God in Christ"¹⁰⁸ and it is intended to meet people at all the most significant stages in their lives.- from the cradle to the grave. The Christian religion¹⁰⁹ centres on a death and resurrection; it is, therefore, able to offer comfort and hope to those who mourn.¹¹⁰ The provision of a liturgical rite to mark a human death is a valued part of the service which the Church offers to the community, not merely to those who are practising christians. Life and death are inseparable. "When we celebrate a wedding we celebrate a union as well as a departure, when we celebrate death we celebrate lost friendship as well as gained liberty".¹¹¹

Most churches of the Protestant tradition concentrate on the following liturgical aspects.

¹⁰⁶ J. S. Pobee, 'Early Christian Worship', The Ghana Bulletin Theology, V. 3, No. 7, December, 1969, p. 8.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, p. 9; John Buxtable, The Bible Says, Richmond, John Knox Press, 1962, p. 108.

¹⁰⁹ The Greek work 'religious' means either 'devout' or 'superstitious'. Whichever interpretation we take need not affect our argument.

¹¹⁰ Neil Dixon, At Your Service. A Commentary on the Methodist Service Book. London, 1976, p. 78.

¹¹¹ H. J. M. Nouwens, Creative Ministry. (New York, 1971), pp. 91-92.

These aspects apparently are also going to guide us in our discussion of similarities and differences, as well as pointing out the particular points of tension for a modern Effutu Christian. In the christian liturgy we notice that:

1. At death there is hope and faith. This is because the Gospel of Christ, crucified, risen, and exalted, bears the promise of the ultimate triumph of good and of the everlasting blessedness of those who accept the mercy of God. This is reflected in the liturgical Scriptural sentences read by the minister who wearing a white or purple stole¹¹² meets the body and goes before it: "Because I live you will live also" etc. This hope assures Christians to believe that man lives on for "whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die" etc.¹¹³ Here Christian faith, has no hesitation in looking beyond the present, nor can it keep silent about that which shall be hereafter. Belief in the consummation of all things in Christ and in the everlasting blessedness of those who accept the mercy of God in Him is not just the expression of a pious hope.

¹¹² In Ghana Anglicans usually wear white vestments. The Methodist clergy in Ghana usually wear white or purple stoles during burial ceremonies.

¹¹³ See Authority of General Assembly, Book of Common Order of the Church of Scotland, London, Oxford Univ. Press, 1940, pp. 165; 'The order of service for burial of the dead', The Methodist Hymn Book and Offices, London, Methodist Conference office, 1954, p. 47. The Church of England, The Book of Common Prayer, p. 284.

It is vital to the whole faith. The New Testament emphasises the importance of setting the present against the background of the future: the Gospels continually point men beyond this age, bidding them not only look to God as Creator of all things at the first and as the source of their redemption, but also as one who, at the last, will subdue all things to Himself.

'If it this life only we have nothing but a mere hope in Christ, we are of all men to be pitied most!' writes St. Paul, 'But it is not so! Christ did rise from the dead The victory is ours, thank God! He makes it ours by our Lord Jesus Christ' (1 Cor. XV. 19, 57). It should be pointed out here that, not only do the sentences meet an age-long yearning of the human heart, but they show this resurrection gospel to be the crown and climax of christian faith, without which all that is believed is incomplete.

Let us notice that what Christians believe about themselves and their creation suggests that death is not the last word of men. The resurrection of the dead is inextricably bound up with the resurrection of Christ and that a divine action (1 Thess. 14:14ff). "All life, here and hereafter, consists in friendship with God Death may put an end to physical existence, but not to a relationship that is by nature eternal".¹¹⁴ (Luke 20:27-40). The reason for this hope for believers in Christ was the realisation that "upon human conduct hang the issue of life and death".¹¹⁵ A further reason is the belief that the

¹¹⁴ G. B. Caird, St. Luke, 1963, p. 224. See also J. Pobee, 'Death in the New Testament' The Ghana Bulletin of Theology, Vol. 3, No. 9. December, 1970, p. 28.

¹¹⁵ Caird, op. cit. p. 192; C. F. D. Moule, "The Influence of Circumstances on the use of Eschatological Terms" in J.Th.S. (No. 5). XV. 1 (1964), p. 9. Where he suggests the parable of Lazarus and Dives underlines the 'irrecoverability of lost opportunity'. Pobee op. cit. p. 28.

dominion of Christ extends over the dead (Rom. 14:9; 8:38-39). Thus death in no way deprives one of a share in God's kingdom. Indeed, it could be a preparation for it, just as Christ's own death was a path to His glory. And so for Paul "Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15:51; Is. 25:8).¹¹⁶

The suggestion so far has been that death is not the last word. Death is welcome because it is regarded as a gain¹¹⁷ as said earlier (Phil. 1:21; Rom. 8:18f); for if our human life be so intimately related to God and so marvellously contrived and upheld by His wisdom and power, death cannot terminate that which has thus marvellously been brought into existence. If Christians are right in speaking of humanity as being made in the likeness of God, Christians must not think that the purpose of His creation is to be fulfilled only within the narrow span of life on earth. In the same way the doctrine of the Christian life carries Christians forward from life here to life hereafter. Let it be illustrated in this way: A great artist was asked: "When is a picture really finished?" "It is never finished, I think" he replied, and went on to say that art was really a symbol of life itself which is never complete, yet is soon over, and we flit away.¹¹⁸ "But for the believer, even death

¹¹⁶ Paul's use of Hosea 13:4 at 1 Cor. 15:15-56 is instructive. The LXX reads: "O death, where is your right (judgement)
O death, where is your sting?"
Paul adapts it to read, "O death, where is thy victory?
O death, where is thy sting?"
The alteration of grave to death is significant. The Greek word for grave (*hades*) is also the name for god of underworld and was a name of horror. The change therefore, suggests Paul is refusing to see death as a horrible thing. Ibid.

¹¹⁷ See p. 77.

¹¹⁸ See Psalm XC:10.

is not the end, for he is persuaded that God, who has already done such great things for him, will not forsake him at the last."¹¹⁹ The Apostles' Creed is the summary of the Christian faith. The hope and faith of the Christian is seen in Jesus' resurrection which is a token and pledge of the resurrection of all believers, and death to Christians is not to be afraid of. Death does not break the living union between believers and their Redeemer. The Biblical passage from Corinthians 15 which is often read also identifies the Christians' hope for life after death with the resurrection.

2. In the burial liturgy we see that Death is a Pilgrimage to God: It is read - "For the souls of the righteous are in the hands of God ... and their journeying away the faithful will abide with him in love".¹²⁰ In the Book of Common Prayer it is read: "~~For~~ ^{From} lightening and tempest ... and from sudden death - Lord deliver us". Here, Christians entrust the departed into the faithful hands of God. Those who know the guidance of the Holy Spirit and have learned to trust to the power bestowed by Him for Christian living here know that they are thus enabled to face the future also without fear. The Christian life therefore is a pilgrimage to the Kingdom of God to which he is a citizen. This last journey is the symbol of the more significant journey of man's home-coming to God. This Kingdom of God, which takes so important a place in the teaching of Jesus about Christian life, is not something which emerges out of the world, but is part of the divine purpose of redemption. This city of God, as Augustine put it, could be entered into through death

¹¹⁹ See J. G. Riddell, What We Believe, Glasgow: Church of Scotland Committee on Publications, 1949, p. 387.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

and the resurrection in Christ.

There is also a liturgical prayer for the journeying deceased that he 'may go from strength to strength in the life of perfect service'. Christians also in their liturgy give thanks for those 'who do rest from their labours'. Thus the communion of saints is pictured as action, as task and reward, as something yet to be achieved and as something already attained. This is a reflection of the fact that in Christians finite vision they cannot fully express in any one set of words such good things as God has prepared for those who love Him. So the Minister during the recommendation reads: - "We are met in this solemn moment to commend ... into the hands of Almighty God, our heavenly Father".¹²¹

The Book of Common Prayer offers prayers for the soul of one 'at the point of departure' that whatsoever defilment it may have contracted through the lusts of the flesh or the wiles of Satan, being purged and done away, it may be presented pure and without spot before thee'.¹²² The prayers express the hope that the deceased will be raised to eternal life, and that those currently mourning his release from the tribulation of life may one day join him. Here we see death as a journey to perfection in Christ. Here we see that "the dying hour is the mere gateway into the 'large room' of the presence of Christ".¹²³

¹²¹ See for instance Methodist Service, The Burial or Cremation of the Dead, Methodist Conference Office, 1974, p. Fs.

¹²² Cf. An Order of Burial, in The Proposed Book of Common Prayer, of the Episcopal Church, 1976, p. 317.

¹²³ H. C. G. Moule, Philippians (1906) p. 24; M. C. Tenney, John (1954) p. 173. Pöbke op. cit. p. 24.

The idea behind this attitude is that "here is no continuing city, here is no abiding stay".¹²⁴ Thus earthly life is only temporary and death leads to the presence of God which has always been the ultimate goal in history. This we may call the positive attitude to death. The most astonishing thing about it is that it stands to the fore in persecution situations. Martyr after martyr dies joyfully because of the hope of fellowship with God (e.g. Rev. 2:10) after their journey home. The truth is death is never read by itself; rather it is read against the background of the power, majesty, justice and love and purpose of the omnipotent God (Rev. 7:14-15; 11:15-18; 15:3-4).¹²⁵ as said earlier.

3. In the burial liturgy we further see the Reality of Death: This is clear during the committal and this entails: "For as much as it hath pleased Almighty God to take unto himself the soul of our brother departed ... earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust". This spells out what Christians are saved from; the Christian message, however, declares that the life's center of gravity is beyond the grave; that is what Christians are saved to. Lowell H. Zuch writes, "The Christian faith has never lost sight of the reality and inevitability of death ... Christianity recalls that the resurrection for the Christian as well as for Jesus Christ could be a reality only after faithful submission to suffering, decay and death".¹²⁶

¹²⁴ T. S. Eliot, Murder in the Cathedral. But see also Rom. 8:18; Phil. 3:20; Heb. 13:14.

¹²⁵ See also Pobee op. cit. p. 24.

¹²⁶ Lowell H. Zuch, 'The changing Meaning of the Funeral in Christian History' Pastoral Psychology, Vol. VIII, No. 78, p. 77.

Pobee¹²⁷ also writes: "Death is considered the inevitable end of every man - good and bad, young and old, rich and poor. Ananias and Sapphira who told lies died; Judas who betrayed Jesus committed suicide and died; Herod who persecuted the saints died. But so too did the fore-fathers of the Jews, great men like the Patriarch Abraham, the prophets (Jn. 6:49, 58; 8:52-53; Lk. 13:34; Mt. 23:37; 1 Thes. 2:15). Even Jesus Christ too died. Thus sooner or later, death comes to man. Indeed to die is to show that you are a human being. This idea of man's mortality is shared by Christianity with Judaism and Hellenistic world". This apparently biological observation is in fact a theological one as well. For there is an implied contrast with God. Immortality is the essential property of God alone.¹²⁸ The inevitability of death for man shows that God is outside of material sphere.¹²⁹ Death, indeed shows man's finitude in contrast to God's eternity, as the death of Herod the Great clearly shows. God alone is the source of life. The point of the inevitability of death is made by the problematic Roman 6:23; "The wages of sin is death". Since "of all men

¹²⁷ Pobee in The Ghana Bulletin of Theology, Vol. 8, No. 9, December, 1970, p. 23. See also Pirke Aboth 4. 229: 'They that have born (are destined) to die'. (H. Danby, The Mishnah, (1933) p. 455). This is classic and typical of the Jewish thinking. For the classical world there was a Greek saying "We all owe death" - quoted by R. Bultmann in T.W.N.T. IV. p. 892-5. It is interesting that Ps. 90:10 gives man a normal life-span of seventy years. If he lives the right kind of life, eighty is a possibility. But these figures are not to be taken literally. For the Psalm is attempting a contrast.

¹²⁸ 1 Tim. 6:16. Two Greek words athanasia (participation in the blissful divine nature and aphtharsia, are seemingly not distinguished in Pauline theology) cf. 1 Cor. 15:53, 54; 1 Tim. 1:17; Rom. 1:23; Wisdom 15:3; Philo Quod Deus immut. 6. This concept shows Greek philosophical influence on the N.T. In Greek usage it amounts to divination in the LXX. It describes the expected eternal life of the righteous (Wisdom 3:4; 15:3) See Bultmann in T.W.N.T. III, pp. 22-25.

¹²⁹ Pobee op. cit. p. 24.

have sinned" and continue to sin, our passage will be another way of affirming that none can escape biological death.¹³⁰

At the Christian funeral therefore, no attempt is made to gloss over the human and earthly side of life for fear of obscuring the heavenly. It is recited therefore, "For as much as it hath pleased Almighty God to take unto himself the 'soul' of our brother here departed we therefore commit his body to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust"¹³¹

4. Finally in the burial liturgy Death is seen as an occasion for thanksgiving: Thanksgiving is a vital ingredient of worship: indeed, the principal act of Christian worship - the Eucharist - is primarily concerned with thanksgiving. It is one of the glories of Christianity that what seems to be a deeply sad occasion can be accompanied by thanksgiving; that there can be joy in the midst of sorrow, and peace at a time of distress. Christians do believe that they will be taken into 'Abraham's bosom' or paradise. 'Abraham's bosom' is a very rare Jewish expression e.g. IV Macc. 12:17; 18:23. Abraham was of course, the great Patriarch with whom God made a covenant to bless all the nations of the earth. Thus to be taken into Abraham's bosom is a picturesque way of saying that Lazarus was "gathered to his fathers" i.e. he was blessed with Fellowship with his illustrious ancestors,¹³² for which every good

¹³⁰ Ibid. There is also what Pobee calls metaphorical death e.g. Rom. 7:13; Jn. 8:51,53 and 1 Jn. 5:16. Death in this sense is to be without God, to be in sin or to persist in sin (Lk. 1:79; Mt. 4:16). Pobee op. cit. p. 19.

¹³¹ See Donalf Macleod, Presbyterian Worship: Its Meaning and Method, Richmond, John Knox Press, 1965, p. 96. The Methodist Hymn and Offices, op. cit. p. Fs.

¹³² J. Bonsirven, Palestinian Judaism in the Time of Jesus, (1964) p. 165; J. Jeremias in T.W.N.T. I, pp. 146-149.

Jew yearned. Paradise, which occurs only three times in the New Testament (Lk. 23:43; 2 Cor. 12:4; Rev. 2:7) also has a long history.¹³³ Christ enters paradise upon death. The penitent thief also goes there. Thus paradise is the abode of the blessed dead. 2 Cor. 12:4 gives the impression that paradise was in the third heaven. Wherever it was, it was the place of bliss and fellowship with God. As the introduction of the 'Ministry of the word',¹³⁴ says 'in the presence of death, Christians have sure ground for hope and confidence, and even for joy'. Prayers of joyous thanksgiving for the redeeming work of Christ, especially through his death and resurrection, and for the hope of everlasting life, as well as a thanksgiving for God's departed servants' - for their lives, love for family, loyalty to friends and destiny in Christ, are all reflected in the current funeral liturgies.

With the above Christian understanding of death one is helped to understand the Christian teaching about death. On the one hand, death in Christianity is not, as in some philosophies, a friend or man's brother in disguise. On the other hand, the Christian knows that the grave has lost its victory and he can know joy even in the face of death because he knows that he who dies will live again.¹³⁵

Like with like (Similarities) and differences: In consideration of the traditional Effutu understanding of death as compared with the contemporary Christian understanding of death and as also guided by the current funeral liturgies, there are bound to be like with like and differences - the differences of which will point out the essential points of tension for a modern Effutu

¹³³ It was Persian in origin and came to be used by the classical writer Xenophon for a park or garden. In the LXX it is used of the Garden of Eden (Gen. 29:3; 13:10) which depicted primeval bliss and Fellowship with God. Ezek. 28:3; 31:8 refer it to a heavenly region.

¹³⁴ See e.g. Methodist Service, op. cit. p. F5.

¹³⁵ John 11/25; Pobee op. cit. p. 30.

Christain convert.

1. Let us first see the like with like. Both the traditional Effutu and the contemporary Christian believe in life-after-death, thus death is not an annihilation of a person who is believed to be with God at death. This is explicitly expressed in Effutu understanding of ancestorship and in the Christian concept of the communion of saints. The continuity of existence after death means that the union between man and God is never broken. The shift of attitudes turns thinking about death from the more unpleasant and ephemeral existence to a comfortable and comforting kind of existence. After having been totally bitten by a poisonous snake a young convert could nevertheless tell the superintendent minister at the Winneba¹³⁶ infirmary that he would soon walk on his affected leg in 'that land where no more pain is' a reference to Revelation 21:4 but with doubtless traditional overtones.- that there is life awaiting him in order to join his forebears. At a time of a convert's death in Nsuekyir, his relatives saw a smile of expectation 'pass over his countenance'.¹³⁷

2. Again both the Effutu and the Contemporary Christian agree that death is real. In inference death is part of human life. It is the bridge between the 'world here' and the 'world there'. This means when a death has occurred it must be talked about, if it is to be accepted, and both Effutu traditional burial (see chapter 4) and burial liturgy of the Church must provide a way

¹³⁶ This was during the course of the writer's field work in February, 1985. This story was told by the circuit minister who was present. The victim was working on his farm when the incident happened.

¹³⁷ This was obtained from the caretaker Mr. Akom of Nsuekyir Methodist Church, during the writer's field work in February, 1985.

of talking about death which is realistic, marking the separation which has taken place, and which yet offers a genuinely (Effutu traditional) and Christian assurance of the sustaining power of God, Nyimpo, who to both the Effutu and the Christian, is the Lord and Giver of life. The feelings of anger and guilt that the bereaved ebusua may have need to be recognized by those traditionally and pastorally involved with the funeral and the care of the bereaved afterwards.

3. Death to the Effutu as well as to the contemporary Christian is not only real but that in the fact of death men are able to experience their own individuality. Thus it is the fact that men die or rather the fact that men know they are going to die, that make men unique personal individuals.

Underlying both points of view, death again is inevitable and universal. Death therefore comes impartially to everyone. There are no privileged or underprivileged in this matter. Men are in the end in the same boat, together not only with their contemporaries but also with all their ancestors and all their descendant. Both believe that in some sense God has a hand in death as at birth and life. After all God is the power behind birth and death. What both are saying is that there is a time to be born and time to die. As finite beings men should die in that life and death are inseparable, and that awareness of man's finitude is crucial to any truly authentic, approach to life.

4. Furthermore, both the Effutu and the contemporary Christian agree that death is a stage in a journey. The Effutu traditional concept of ancestorship and the Christian liturgy for the dead which is an Easter liturgy, have great meaning. To the

Christians, because Jesus was raised from the dead, they, too, believe that they shall be raised. This raising of the dead who are to be called saints is equalled to the Effutu traditional belief that the dead become ancestors who live and participate in the affairs of men as the saints. The Effutu traditional concept of ancestorship and the Christian liturgy, therefore, is characterized by joy at death. This joy, however does not make human grief traditionally a taboo nor unchristian. The very love the Effutu traditionally have for each other coupled with Christians' love in Christ brings deep sorrow when they are parted at death. After all Jesus wept at the grave of his friend. So, while traditional Effutu and the Christian rejoice that one they love has entered into the 'nearer' presence of Nvimpo, the Lord, they sorrow in sympathy with those who mourn. What both are ~~saying~~ saying is that life itself is a journey which one undertakes every day, every hour, every minute and every second. Beyond the frontier of this world is God's Kingdom - the final destination of man.

Here we see on the face of it a definite congruence of the traditional Effutu and Christian or biblical visions of the journey of the 'soul' to 'heaven' at death to be with the Deity. For both traditional Effutu and the Christian death is indeed a journey home. Heaven as Christian may call it and Nyimpo Ye - the palace of God as traditional Effutu believes to be, is his or her home since in a real sense his 'spirit will always remain in 'heaven' to give support and protection to the one sojourning on earth.¹³⁸

¹³⁸ For another interesting account of this concept of a journey home see W. Bascom, The Yoruba of Southwestern Nigeria. New York, Holt, Rineheart and Wiston, 1969, p. 406.

5. Another feature of interaction between traditional and Christian is the notion of sudden death which is traditionally believed to occur from witchcraft and sorcery. This could itself be the result of Christian influence as represented by the litany in the Book of Common Prayer: "From lightening and tempest ... and from sudden death - Good Lord deliver us". However, if we proceed, as we must, from the undoubted fact of the prevalence of sudden death in West Africa and especially in the Effutu area then we arrive at congruence of the traditional Effutu view with the Christian view not the dependence of the former upon the latter.
6. Another area of traditional and Christian interaction is in connection with origin of death. In both traditional and Christian, there is a story to tell to explain the cause of death. By this we see that in both instances their forebears were mythically minded and there is no doubt of authenticity of their experiences to explain the causes of every event.
7. For both traditional Effutu and the Christian sleep is common expression for death. This concept of sleep for death is found in Effutu proverbial sayings. They believe that one wakes up after sleep. This wake-up after sleep could be implied to the Christian hope of the resurrection of the body which means the whole body. To both traditional Effutu and the Christian, death, the king of terrors, is not the end of a person. Death is the interim, so to speak, between this temporary earthly life and the fuller and eternal life that awaits everybody (to the Effutu) and believers (to the Christians).

Differences:

1. Whereas the Effutu converts believe in a non-natural power of witches, which can bring about death and which is at the willing or unwilling disposal of certain people, the Christian Church on the other hand denies any such power and thus has no room for such a power. Yet Paul talks about principalities and powers. The Church therefore offers no challenge to the basic assumptions underlying witchcraft belief. The result is that in the Effutu state there is the effect of village, town and city rivalries which are all readily interpreted in the framework of witch belief which develop a momentum of their own. Fears of witches among the Effutu converts are heightened by religious conflicts and social tensions.

In this death by witchcraft or sudden death there is no warning and no way of avoiding it, as Morton-Williams put it.¹³⁹ It can happen to young and old equally. A widower of Effutu convert died while weeding in his farm at Ateitu on Saturday, 24th May, 1984. Those who came to see him were said to have exclaimed: "Can this be Nyimpo. God, deliver us from sudden death (abeyiwu)". The traditional Effutu while echoing this sentiment, added words of reproach about (Nyimpo) God's cruelty in removing him from the midst of life through the witch. In this they could doubtless appeal to one interpretation of the words of committal: "For as much as it hath pleased Almighty God to take unto himself the soul of our brother departed"

¹³⁹ Refer P. Morton-Williams, 'Yoruba Responses to the Fear of Death', Africa. Vol. XXX, 1960, pp. 34-40.

2. Whereas belief in Christ's resurrection coupled with the fact that Christ bore his death, believers are therefore delivered from the second death - the death that separates man from God, the Effutu Christian converts on the other hand traditionally believe that the dead go to God from whom he comes, life comes from God and to him it returns. In inference what the Effutu converts are saying is that ultimately all people will be saved - to be in the so called palace of God. They further believe that if the cross, as the Church claims 'is really a full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world' then universal salvation must be a real possibility. Equally, the joy of heaven will not be complete whilst anyone is excluded. In otherwords, to the Effutu converts, human kind has a kind of immortality. As taught by the Christian missionaries, life after death for believers is not natural but the gift of God in Christ.
3. Another difference concerns the liturgical claim that 'God should take unto himself the 'soul' of our brother departed'. To this claim an ordinary Effutu Christian convert with his traditional understanding of the soul, the okra has a problem. This 'okra' will be discussed fully in Chapter 3. The Christian traditional religious conception of the human being has been that of a body, of mind and an immortal soul. In the light of advances over the last 100 years, in the fields of genetics, physics, biochemistry, psychology and social observation, can such a trichotomy be sustained?

John Hick, in a short monograph entitled "Biology and the soul",¹⁴⁰ has presented many of the issues involved in a lucid manner.

Professor Hick begins by helping the non-scientist to grasp something of the almost infinite complexity and prodigality of the genetic process at the conclusion of which a human child is conceived. Out of "three to six hundred million sperms which the father launches on their race to reach and fertilise the ovum" only one 'continues in the life of the new organism'. This one sperm in its constitution is different at some point from the others, and the female egg which it fertilizes is less than identical with any other. Each is an apparently haphazard assortment of chromosomes derived from the long heredity of the present concerned and blended in a unique and utterly unpredictable way. Hence 'we are not "selfmade men", but products of forces to work outside and prior to ourselves', forces which seem to operate to a large degree 'by chance'. Indeed Professor Hick stresses 'the randomness of the process'.

To the Christian traditional concept of immortal soul, Hick maintains that, the possibility that, 'the soul is the locus of our personal and moral freedom', to be identified with 'our basic moral and religious attitude' could not be recommended as the solution.

¹⁴⁰ John Hick, Biology and the Soul, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1972..

He asserts that in common usage the word soul has a valuational connotation. 'Soul language' therefore, may be said to express 'the sense of the sacredness of human personality'. Hick argues that in that case 'souls to be saved are not some mysterious entity attached to people', but simply people themselves.

In consequence of this, Hick further submits that 'we must be prepared to renounce the idea that whereas the body has been produced by natural processes the soul has been produced by a special act of divine creation.

Apart from what Hick has said, the traditional Effutu converts traditionally¹⁴¹ also believe that they have no such trichotomy which is maintained by the western Christian tradition. Here the main problem revolves around the fact that although psychologists are agreed that man's constitutional make-up, his mind and body are the product of heredity and environment, it is not easy to fit the soul into such a pattern. The Effutu converts traditionally believe that in man's constitutional make-up there is rather the mbogya from the mother, the sunsum from the father and the okra from God. They are inseparable.

¹⁴¹ This was obtained from Opanyin Kow Damtse a convert in the Methodist Church of Winneba, Opanyin Kwesi Dadze a farmer and a convert of the Anglican Church of Gyahadze, Obaahembaa Ekua Akom of Nsuekyir a trader and a member of the Presbyterian Church, Winneba. This was during the writer's field work in March, 1985.

20-rc. 7/11 The Effutu converts further believe that to say that the soul must be separate and must form the inner core of individuality, the 'unique personal essence of a human being' is to postulate a soul without content. They believe that all souls, on this reckoning would therefore be alike. They believe that it is rather that any means of differentiation between individuals would be on account of our bodies (i.e. embodied soul). Thus to say that God should take unto himself the 'soul' of the brother departed becomes an unnecessary concept. What the Effutu Christian converts are implying is that some of man's make-up is innate but not inherited from parents. In otherwords, certain qualities are possessed which have not been inherited from parents but have been inseparably implanted by God, and without which both the mbogya, blood from the mother and the sunsum, the physical being from the father would not have been effective.

Of the understanding and attitude to death among the Effutu and the contemporary Christians, it has been established among other things that death is not the end of man. The concept of the soul has been a prominent feature in both the Effutus and the current Christian liturgical forms. To the Effutu converts, at death the soul is not without content. It is an embodied rational animate being which exists for ever as an ancestor.

Immortality in this sense is an aspiration of the 'embodied soul' which actuates the individual to a pious communion with the fulfilment of the will of God.

The Effutu Christians therefore have the difficulty in understanding how western Christians could explain the moment at which the immortal soul enters the body, Is it really true that God creates a new soul and infuses it into each man as affirmed by the Vatican Council?¹⁴² Presumably, therefore, on this assumption, there are some qualities which come to a man because of the God-given soul apart from those (i.e. mind, body) he receives from heredity and environment. But what are these qualities? Surely, the Church should revise her 'soul language'. This would be of great help to the understanding whether there is an embodied-existence or disembodied-existence after death. The concept of disembodied survival after death seem to contradict the Effutu beliefs. To this bodily survival after death we now turn.

¹⁴² See Walter M Abbott, S.J. (ed.) The Documents of Vatican II: In a New and Definite Translation with Commentaries and Notes, by Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox Authorities, London, Dublin, 1966, p. 212.

CHAPTER III

BODILY SURVIVAL AFTER DEATH IN CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN AND TRADITIONAL EFFUTU UNDERSTANDING

Many religious people today are asking whether or not there is a bodily survival after death. In the Effutu Traditional Area, the impact of the people's traditional belief about bodily survival after death has brought about a sharp contrast between the people's views and the contemporary Christian understanding. This Chapter will therefore deal mainly with what the contemporary Christian understanding is as against that of the traditional Effutu understanding. In this way, the following three areas are going to be examined:

- (a) The Contemporary Christian Understanding
- (b) The Traditional Effutu Understanding
- (c) The Conflict.

(a) The contemporary Christian understanding: Here it should be said that the intention is not to give a full theology of the resurrection of the body, but merely the background and certain common Christian views.

The Old Testament has contributed much to the development of the contemporary Christian understanding of the body after death. The Old Testament places man completely within the natural order. "He has no advantage over the beast".¹ Man is like grass that withers, and the flowers that fades.² The denial of life after death and the bodily survival after death as presented

¹ Eccl. 12/7.

² Psalm 90/5.

by the Hebraic thought has made Charles³ say that the nature of existence in Sheol was heathen and non-moral and could in no sense form a basis on which to found an ethical and spiritual doctrine of the future life.

However, there are some references in the Old Testament suggesting that death means the end of all existence,⁴ but more usual is the view that death is not mere annihilation.⁵ "To be dead", says F. C. Grant, has never meant "to be non-existent".⁶ So long at least as the bones remain in the grave, the dead person continues to exist in the Sheol. As said earlier, such life after death is envisaged as a wretched state, a shadowy existence in a condition of extreme weakness. It is essential, however to remember that, as we can see from stories like that of the witch of Endor (1 Sam. 28), the dead were believed still to have a body. "Something different from the Greek belief in the immortality of the soul is therefore found here, since there is no idea of a disembodied existence here".⁷

It is characteristic of the Old Testament view that death does not imply a separation of body and soul.⁸ "A live man is

³ Robert H. Charles, Eschatology, a doctrine of a future life in Israel, Judaism and Christianity: a critical history. New York; Schocken Books, 1963, p. 53.

⁴ 2 Samuel 14:14; Job 7:21; Psalm 39:13.

⁵ H. W. Huppenbauer, 'Death, an Old Testament View', The Ghana Bulletin of Theology, V.3, No. 9. December, 1970, p. 11.

⁶ F. C. Grant, in Dictionary of the Bible, 2nd ed. revised by E. W. and H. H. Rowley, 1963, p. 206.

⁷ H. H. Rowley, The Faith of Israel, 1961, p. 156.

⁸ Huppenbauer, op. cit. p. 11.

a living 'soul' (nephesh), and a dead man is a dead 'soul'.⁹ If we take the Hebrew expression in the literal sense it is the soul that dies. Thus Samson said: "Let my soul die with the Philistines" (Judges 16:30). This expression derives from the fact that the term 'soul', in the Old Testament is very different from what the English term 'soul', denotes. (See also Chapter 2). Most important in this connection is the fact that in Hebrew thinking 'soul' is not part of man, but designs the whole man, his whole personality with his body and often including the community behind him.¹⁰ There is no soul without body.¹¹ For that reason death in the Old Testament does not mean that two elements called soul and body are separated, and that then the body is dissolved while the soul continues to live.¹² Yet for so long a period Israel showed so little interest in the condition of man after death. This was because Israel was interested in death not so much as a biological phenomenon but as a religious phenomenon. The main question was "did you find yourself (with a body) in the presence of God?" Their main concern therefore had to be how the living people of God could maintain a living relationship with the living God. In the cultural environment in which Israel found itself this concern could express itself only in the practical consideration of what their own relation to the whole realm of death was, but not in speculations about

⁹ R. de Vaux, Ancient Israel, 2nd ed. 1968, p. 56.

¹⁰ Huppenbauer, op. cit. p. 11.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² According to E. Jacob the occasional expression "his/her soul departed" (Gen. 35:18; John 4:3) is a metaphor of speech since the 'nephesh' does not continue independently of the body (Ibid. p. 11). See also R. de Vaux op. cit. p. 802.

the condition of the departed.

However, the problem of death¹³ was overcome and integrated in the religion of Israel at a later stage and in a quite different way. In some of the latest parts of the Old Testament we find the growing hope for the resurrection of the dead. It was in this hope that the problem of death and the whole sphere surrounding it was finally integrated.¹⁴

We have, however, to add that of the various texts often quoted to show this growing hope not all are really speaking of the resurrection of the individual dead.¹⁵ The only Old

¹³ There were some practices like mourning rites such as cutting the hair on the forehead, shaving the edges of the beard and making cuttings on account of the dead Lev. 19:27, 28; 21:5; Dt. 14:11, necromancy, seeking 'mediums' (Lev. 19:31; 20:6; Dt. 18:11; 1 Sam. 28:3, 9; 2 Kg. 23:24) offering part of the first fruits to the dead (Dt. 26; 14). These rites were considered to express a sacral relation with the dead. G. von Rad. Ibid. p. 277. If this was the case, then the first commandment was at stake.

¹⁴ Huppenbauer, op. cit. p. 16.

¹⁵ Ezek. 37, the vision of the bones which were turned back into living men speaks metaphorically of the recreation of the dead nation but not of a personal resurrection of the individual. The bones represent the dead nation Israel which will be restored only through a new act of creation by God himself. Job 19.15 is a most difficult and obscure passage. With all cautiousness Rowley comments that there is no hint here of more than a momentary consciousness of Job's "vindication by God in whom he trusted" while he admits that the author may have attempted to reach out after something more satisfying than the common view, without however grasping it securely (Faith in Israel, p. 165). Isa. 26:19 if taken out of its context seems clearly to indicate the resurrection of the righteous dead to life. In its context, however, it may more probably be understood as promise similar to that of Ezekiel 37, the raising of the nation out of its misfortune. Huppenbauer, in The Ghana Bulletin of Theology, 1970, p. 16.

Testament reference to resurrection which is beyond doubt is Daniel 12:2: "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake"

How did God's people reach this new expression of faith in which the sphere of death was integrated in the realm of God's authority and grace? One negative answer can be given at once: The belief in the resurrection of the dead did not emerge out of any speculation about the soul of man. The biblical hope for resurrection is fundamentally different from any concept of the immortality of the soul. Positively we can account for the new insight in two ways:

(1) History, and the Exile in particular, led Israel to a growing insight into ^aYahweh's dominion over all parts of the world, all nature, and all the powers in it. Yahweh, who in his anger had sent them into Exile had led them back into the promised land. Metaphorically speaking: he had brought the dead nation back to life. He had proved that his authority and faithfulness reached beyond the powers of affliction and "death" in the widest sense of the term.¹⁶

(2) There is another, perhaps even more important aspect of the same experience. The contribution which helped decisively to break the spell of death came from the question of the reality of God's righteousness and fulfilment of his promise. In this connection E. Jacob and G. von Rad draw our attention to Psalm 16 and 73. Von Rad¹⁷ has shown that we should consider the two Psalms as meditations on the ancient promise "Yahweh is thy portion." Yahweh's righteousness - so the Israelite faith seems now to have argued - demands that this promise is kept

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Von Rad, Old Testament Theology, V.1. New York; Harper and Row Publishers, 1962, p. 403ff.

even beyond the limits of death. Yahweh will hold fast his faithful even in death.

"The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup,
thou holdest my lot.
Thou dost not give me up to Sheol,
or let thy godly one see the Pit". (Ps. 16:5, 10)

"Nevertheless I am continually with thee,
thou dost hold my right hand.
My flesh and thy heart may fail,
but God is the strength of my heart
and my portion for ever." (Ps. 73:23, 26)

This future hope was embraced by the ancestors of the later Pharisees. This was because only so could the justice of God, which they refused to question, be harmonized with the facts of experience. The persecutions of Antiochus undoubtedly had the deciding role. As righteous men were brutally done to death, or lost their lives fighting for the faith, belief that God would vindicate his justice beyond the grave became an absolute necessity for the majority of the Jews.

This became a new doctrine, but it was one that was needed to fill out the structure of Israel's faith, if that faith was to remain tenable. This became an accepted belief among the Jews and was triumphantly reaffirmed in the Christian Gospel.¹⁸

From the Old Testament perspective it could be seen that 'when the Old Testament looks at man' it concludes that he cannot live beyond the grave, but when it looks towards God, and ponders over the relationship between God and man it moves in a direction which must, and which did, lead man towards a future hope.¹⁹ In like-manner Wheeler Robinson writes:²⁰

¹⁸ John Bright, A History of Israel, London, SCM Press, 1962, p. 439.

¹⁹ Badham, Paul. Christian Belief and Life After Death, London: MacMillan Press, 1976, p. 17.

²⁰ H. W. Robinson, Inspiration and Revelation in the O.T., London: SCM Press, 1952, p. 103.

"The faith of the Old Testament logically points forward towards a life beyond death, because it is so sure of an inviolable fellowship with God, but it does not attain to any clear vision of the goal of its journey. Nevertheless this religious faith supplied the real content for the resurrection hope when this has been reached".

In the Christian gospel therefore, we see that the development from death of the body to the hope of resurrection from the Old Testament perspective, is confirmed and supported by Jesus' resurrection.

The question then forces itself: What kind of body is the resurrection body? Here it should be acknowledged that there are differences in Christian understanding today. But before we discuss that, we should first know what Paul has to say. This is because, the first report that we find in the New Testament comes from him. That report is the credal formula in 1 Cor. 15/3-5.²¹

For Paul the body is the carrier of man's resurrection.²² Paul maintains that the appearances of Jesus were made in what he calls a "spiritual body" (1 Cor. 15/44), and the material

²¹ cf. Edward Schweizer. Two New Testament Creeds Compared, 1 Cor. 15/3-5 and 1 Timothy 3/16 in current Issues in New Testament Interpretation (New York: Harper, 1962) pp. 166-177, 291-293; reprinted in E. Schweizer, Neotestamentica (Zurich: Zwingli Verlag, 1963) 122-131. For a more recent discussion, cf. K. Ledermann, Auferweckt am dritten Tag (Freiburg; Herder, 1968) esp. 17-157; A. Vogtle/R. Pesch. Wie kam es zum Osterglauben? (Düsseldorf: Patmos Verlag, 1975) esp. 37-59, 136-156.

²² H.W. Robinson, Job and His Friends, London, SCM Press, 1954, p. 29.

of which the body (i.e. the corpse of Jesus) was composed was somehow transformed (as practically all Christians believe characterised the Jesus of the Easter experience),²³ "a spiritual body is a logical hybrid".²⁴ Paul thinks of resurrected existence as radically different from Christian present physical life in a body of flesh and blood.²⁵ He therefore finds it fitting to invent the highly paradoxical concept of "spiritual body" to denote this state. Paul's claim that resurrected existence is no mere resuscitation of physical existence implies that he could hardly have regarded Jesus' resurrection as consisting simply in the raising of his physical body.²⁶ As for the details 1 Corinthians 15 gives Christians their only intimation. When this earthly life is over, this body of flesh and blood has completed its work; it cannot inherit the Kingdom of God (V 50). The resurrection life involves the creation by God of a resurrection body to be

²³ Don Cupitt, Christ and the Hiddness of God, London Lutterworth, 1971, p. 144.

²⁴ Paul Badham, Christian Beliefs and Life After Death, London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1976, p. 11. cf. H. H. Rowley, From Moses To Qumran, Association Press, 1963, pp. 181-2.

²⁵ 1 Cor. 15/35 ff: Kendrick Grobel maintains that in the Greek the sharp distinction between the physical and the spiritual in this passage is even more pronounced, because it is not at all clear that impersonal 'it' refers to some continuing 'body' at all. Hence he translates: 'There is sown in corruption ... dishonour ... weakness a body (once) animate; there is raised in incorruption ... glory ... power ... a body spiritual' - the 'two bodies' thus being quite distinct realities. Gordon D. Kaufman, Systematic Theology: A Historicist Perspective, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1968, p. 417, f.n.

²⁶ Paul apparently thinks of Jesus' resurrected existence as similar to that which he expects all men of faith will enjoy, because he can argue from the expectation of a general resurrection to the fact that Christ was raised (1 Cor. 15/13, 15-16), as well as from the fact of Christ's resurrection to the hope for all (1 Cor. 15/12, 14, 17-18, 20-23). For Paul Christ is to be regarded then, as 'the first fruit of those who have fallen asleep' (1 Cor. 15/20). The concept of resurrection have involved is univocal. Ibid p. 418. f.n.
here.

the vehicle of the recreated person. Although it is true that Christians do not know what the resurrection body will be like, at least Paul offers more possibilities of activity and recognition than disembodied souls which defy all imagining.

Furthermore, it should not be surprising, that, in contrast with the Gospels, which make much of the story of the empty tomb, Paul nowhere shows any interest in or even knowledge of such legend. This however, does not mean that he doubted it was the actual Jesus of Nazareth who was raised from the dead - that is, that he doubted the genuine continuity of the resurrected with the historical Jesus. Nor does it mean that a bodiless Jesus (whatever that might be) was what was raised. Paul believes, rather, it was a radically transformed Jesus, clothed now in a "spiritual body", something to be sharply contrasted with his flesh-and-blood existence. Paul was convinced that Jesus was alive again but in some nonphysical mode of being.²⁷

Paul does not go further than saying that the relationship between the flesh and blood²⁸ body and the resurrection, or

²⁷ As a matter of fact, Paul's highly paradoxical concept of "spiritual body" really helps little in understanding what this nonphysical mode was, since it is not clear with what analogies in our experience we should interpret it. It therefore remains a bare word not until we find such analogies. Paul evidently intends to affirm personal continuity while denying physical continuity, but there is a little more we can say. cf. John Stacey, Groundwork of Theology, London, Epworth Press, 1977, p. 304, (3rd Paragraph).

²⁸ If "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God" it is difficult to think that Paul could possibly have believed that Jesus rose from the grave as, or in, a physical body. It is amazing as to whether Paul could not have known of the more corporeal elements in the resurrection stories in the gospels is not clear. In other words, if the body of the risen Christ could be handled, and if he truly ate food, then flesh and blood manifestly did inherit the Kingdom of God. The fact of the matter is that, we are not at liberty to regard such important claims as that Jesus ate, or permitted himself to be touched, as matters which Paul knew but passed over. They are of such fundamental importance, and go so far beyond the mere fact of Jesus' having been seen, that Paul, had he known them, could not have mentioned them, unless he deliberately chose to let slip the most important proofs for his contention. G. W. H. Lampe and D. M. Mackinnon, The Resurrection, pp. 58-59; Paul Wilhelm

spiritual body is akin to the relationship between the seed sown in the ground and the full corn (vv 36-7).

Resurrection is not only in the sense of the Holy Spirit taking possession of the inner man (the soul) but is also resurrection of the body and the soul. This is a new creation of matter, an incorruptible matter. Nowhere else in the world is there this new Spiritual matter. Nowhere else is there a Spiritual body - only here in Christ. The body of Christ is the first resurrection body, the first spiritual body.

So far for Paul the resurrection body of Jesus is a 'spiritual body'. Paul was the first person to express in writing the fact that the Christian faith stands on the resurrection of Jesus from the dead: "If Christ has not been raised then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain" (1 Cor. 15/14). What therefore is the traditional Christian belief of the resurrection of the body which even holds today though there are now differences in Christian understanding? To this question we now turn.

Christianity inherited from late Judaism the idea of the expectation of some blessed life with God beyond death. The decisive new fact for Christians was and is the resurrection of Christ²⁹ as said earlier.

²⁸ (cont'd) Schmiedel, "the Resurrection Narratives and Modern Criticism: A Critique mainly of Professor Schmiedel's article". Resurrection Narratives in the Encyclopedia Biblica IV: 1910, p. 4055.

²⁹ J. S. Pobee 'Funerals In Ghana', The Ghana Bulletin of Theology, V. 4. N. 5. December, 1973, p. 20.

Traditionally therefore, Christians believe that Jesus rose with body and soul³⁰ after he was fully and really dead.. In answering the question: 'What do we mean by the resurrection of the body' as for instance in the Senior Catechism of the Methodist Church, it was said that: "Those who have the life which Christ came to give will overcome death and with a body suited to the life of heaven will rise to eternal fellowship with God".³¹ The fourth article of the Church Of England puts it this way: "Christ did truly rise again from death, and took again his body, with flesh, bones, and all things pertaining to the perfection of Man's nature; wherewith he ascended into heaven,"³² Christ has indeed been resurrected from death with a body. So Christians believe and expect that they will be "raised up with the selfsame bodies and none other"³³ when they die.

Christian faith in the 'resurrection of the body',³⁴ as the Creed puts it, rests not only on Empty Tomb i.e. the psychological reason as in the case of Mary Magdalene but also on what

³⁰ It should be noted that though the New Testament certainly knows the difference between body and soul, or more precisely between the inner and the outer man, yet this distinction does not however, imply opposition, as if the one were by nature good, the other by nature bad. Both belong together, both are created by God. The inner man (the soul) without the outer has no proper, full existence. It requires a body. See O. Cullman, Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Dead, p. 33 cf. W. G. Kummel, Das Bild des Menschen, pp. 16 ff.

³¹ Stacey, op. cit. pp. 284-285.

³² The Church of England, op. cit. p. 370. See also Leith, op. cit. p. 267. The Fourth Lateran Council, Calvin's Institutes; Luther's Small Catechism all look for the resurrection of the dead in the traditional sense of the uprising of the corpses cf. C. S. Rodd (ed.) "Talking Points from Books" in Expository Times LXXXVIII, 5, 1977, p. 131.

³³ James Donaldson, Westminster Confession of Faith and the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England, London: Longmans Green and Co., 1905, p. 50.

³⁴ "There is often reference to spiritual body. People tend to equate the spiritual and the immaterial. In the Christian view it is not the stuff but the end it serves and the

effect the belief had on the lives of Christians i.e. the creation of a Christian society in its depth and transformed quality of life.³⁵

In the Apostles' Creed the doctrine of the Resurrection of the flesh³⁶ was incorporated. This was taught in Calvin's Institutes and also in Luther's Small Catechism.³⁷ In the Church of England, this was their traditional teaching. Without doubt, this has become the basic faith among ~~the~~ Western Christendom as well as among most Christians in the world, for a long time, and nothing has ever changed it.

This Creed was what the Christian fathers came to believe in and to defend. The reason why most of the Christian Fathers insisted on the resurrection of the flesh was their belief that it is the inner man's very nature (the soul) which demands the body and only bodily continuity could ensure personal survival. Notwithstanding the fact that they believed in the immortality of the soul,³⁸ yet the inner man without the outer has no

³⁴ (cont'd) purpose by which it is organised that makes a thing spiritual". Pobee op. cit. p. 20.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Rufinus Apostles Creed, para. 43.

³⁷ M. E. Dahl, The Resurrection of the Body (SCM, 1962), p. 37.

³⁸ Cullmann, op. cit. p. 76. The doctrine of the Immortality of the soul was not taught by the biblical writers themselves, but it was common in the Greek and Oriental religions of the ancient world in which the Christian Church was born. Some of the earliest theologians were influenced by it, read the Bible in the light of it and introduced it into the thinking of the Church. It has been with us ever since, influencing even the Reformed Confessions. See Westminster Confession XXXII; the Belgic Confession, Art XXXVII.

proper, full existence³⁹ and would be insufficient.⁴⁰

Against the Christian traditional background that (a) after death Christians will be raised in the flesh and (b) that the selfsame bodies will rise is regarded by many Christians as an absurd assertion. Christian theologians⁴¹ of the present day who disagree argue that nobody is ever the same, but undergoes continual change. They further maintain that these 'Spiritual bodies' will not be the same bodies as those that Christians have now, nor will they be glorified and transformed versions of these bodies. On the contrary these bodies will be quite different bodies, and the only bond of unity between Christians' present and future bodies is that they will be 'possessed' successively by the same personality. They argue that the notion of a physical visible spiritual body is an impossible compromise. As the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Doctrine in the Church of England puts it: "We expect to be not 'unclothed' but clothed upon (2 Cor. V. 4) ... While, in the judgement of

³⁹ Callmann, op. cit. p. 33.

⁴⁰ See Justin, On the Resurrection, ch. 8. Athenagoras, On the Resurrection, ch. 15; Tatian, To the Greeks, ch. 15; Irenaeus Heresies, 5/6/1; Tertullian, Concerning the Resurrection, ch. 34; Methodius, Discourse On Resurrection, ch. 4; Archelaus; Fragment of in Ante-Nicene Library XX 308; Arnobius, Against The Pagans, 2/2; Cyril of Jerusalem, Lecture 4, ch. 18; Augustine, City of God, 14/5; Origen, First Principles, 2/2.

⁴¹ Cupitt, op. cit. p. 138, E. J. Bicknell, The Thirty Nine Articles (Longmans, 1935), p. 102; M. Paternoster, Stronger than Death (SPCK, 1972), p. 53; A. M. Ramsey, The Resurrection of Christ, (Fontana, 1962), p. 113; C. B. Moss, The Christian Faith, (SPCK, 1957), p. 448; J. A. Baker, The Foolishness of God, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1970, p. 286; Alwinckle, op. cit. p. 87. To these may be added: Hugh Burnaby, Thinking Through the Creed (Hodden, 1964), p. 88; John Baillie, And the Life Everlasting, O.U.P., 1964, p. 253; Alec Vidler, A Plain Man's Guide to Christianity (Heinemann, 1936), p. 248; David Winter, Hereafter (Hodder, 1972), p. 65; Charles Gore, The Resurrection of Belief, (John Murray, 1951), p. 924; Leonard Hodgson, For Faith and Freedom (SCM, 1968) 11, 195; Austin Farrer, Saving Belief (Hodder, 1967), p. 140.

the commission we ought to reject quite frankly the literalistic belief in a future resuscitation of the actual physical frame which is laid in the tomb What is important, when we are speaking of the identity of any person's 'body' is not its physio-chemical constitution, but its relation to that person".⁴²

According to the consensus of contemporary theological thinking there is an endorsement of what M. E. Dahl sees the 'accepted exegesis' as stressing God's creative power in the resurrection, creating a brand new body, perhaps not physical, not developed out of this present body. This he labels heterosomatism. In contrast, he himself believes in 'somatic identity' between this body and the resurrection body.⁴³ For, he says, seed and plant are 'organically identical; they are not merely "related" or "continuous"'.⁴⁴ By this he seems to mean that Paul's analogy has plant develop out of the seed, without the destruction of the seed. It is the same matter (to use a philosophical term) which persists through the change. In many of the books on Christian doctrine in current usage, Dahl's view has been endorsed by the majority of the contemporary Christian scholars. R. J. Sider apparently makes the same point as Dahl, though he prefers to speak of 'organic continuity' between the two bodies, something which is compatible with

⁴² The Report of the Commission on Christian Doctrine Appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York in 1922, Doctrine in the Church of England, New York, SPCK., 1962, p. 209.

⁴³ Dahl, op. cit. p. 89, p. 94.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 27, See also p. 33 n.1.

discontinuity and transformation.⁴⁵ "A living Christian with a very material, very tangible physical body can become a 'soma pneumatikon'.⁴⁶

Another Christian view is that the idea of continuation of life beyond the grave let alone bodily survival should be dismissed.⁴⁷ This means that resurrection is an impossibility.

Other scholars like Gooch, Price, Lewis, Pen^elhum analyse a possible concept of immortality. They maintain that the next world, if there is one, might be a world of 'mental images' not bodily survival and that it is impossible to know or identify such bodiless beings.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ R. J. Sider, "The Pauline Conception of the Resurrection Body in 1 Corinthians XV 35-54" New Testament Stud. XXI (1974-75). p. 430.

⁴⁶ Ibid. p. 434. Dahl would agree '... a body-spiritual, a personality completely controlled and informed by the creative spirit of God and therefore beyond corruption. Man is that kind of flesh, with that kind of destiny'. (p. 81).

⁴⁷ See Aldwinckle, op. cit. p. 38; Heinz Zahrnt, The Questions of God, (Collins, 1969), p. 218, on what Bultmann's position is; David L. Edwards, The Last Things Now, (SCM, 1969), p. 89; Paul Tillich, The Shaking of the Foundations (Penguin, 1963), pp. 71-81. cf. John Hick, Faith and Knowledge (second edition, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966) Chapter 8.

⁴⁸ P. W. Gooch, "On Disembodied Resurrected Persons: A study in the logic of Christian eschatology" Religious Studies, XVII 1981, p. 212; H. H. Price, "Survival and the Idea of Another World" In Brain and Mind ed. J. R. Smythies, London, R. Routledge and K. Paul, 1965, p. 4; H. D. Lewis, Self and Immortality, New York: The Seabury Press, 1973, p. 147. Perhaps the most vigorous defender of the possibility of disembodied persons who survive death is H. D. Lewis. See also his most recently, Persons and Life After Death, London: Macmillan, 1978, cf. two papers by Richard Pertill: "Disembodied survival", Sophia XIII, 1, 1973, pp. 1-10 and the "Intelligibility of Disembodied Survival" Chr. Sch. Rev. V, 1, 1975, pp. 3-22; D. Z. Phillips, Death and Immortality, London: Macmillan 1970, p. 133; T. Penelhum, Survival and Disembodied Existence, New York: Humanities Press, 1970, p. 302. Anti-theists like Antony Flew advocates the abandonment of all expectations for survival. See his article: "Can A Man Witness his Own Funeral" Hibb J. 1956 for his claim that it is logically impossible to survive death.

From the traditional Christian point of view, any ordinary Christian believes that he will have a resurrected body after death. The body will look the same as his previous body before death. But when the theologian or philosopher who is trying to reflect on his beliefs ventilates his feelings everything changes.

The following basic features come to light:

1. The nature of the resurrected body is nonphysical; it could be mere mental image.
2. The nonphysical body is in no form of space; there is no continuity of existence.
3. The qualities attributed to the resurrected body are that of spiritual body; and that the nature of the resurrection body might be possible in a disembodied resurrected state; the resurrection body is therefore different from the ante-mortem body.

The question now is: what is the traditional Effutu understanding of the body which is in conflict with that of the contemporary Christian understanding? To this question we now turn.

Against the background of the summary of contemporary Christian teaching is the traditional Effutu understanding⁴⁹ of the body after death.

⁴⁹ Nearly all the writer's informants were old or middle-aged people. This is because most of them were people who were regarded by the Effutu communities in which they lived as people who had knowledge, people who knew the traditional forms of religion by virtue of their age and experience or people who had impressed their neighbours by their wisdom. The accuracy of the account, therefore, of bodily continuity after death, depends upon the validity of their experience and knowledge.

Four factors play an important part in determining the nature of bodily continuity after death in the traditional Effutu understanding. They are: 1. The Sacred and the Secular; 2. The desire for a better existence,⁵⁰ 3. Appearances of the ancestors and 4. Personal experience.

1. The Effutu in their traditional manner of life, tend to be instinctively religious, in their own way and according to their own ideas.* Religion is one with their life, a life lived religiously, a life which absorbs the whole man with their thoughts and actions. The religious element, whether pure or deformed, is a single whole with an individual family, social and political life, with the necessities of existence, with laws and prohibitions, with beliefs and ancestral customs.⁵¹ In simple terms, to the Effutu, everything belongs to God. Religion is life, is in all life. It is not just a 'way of life', it is the whole of it. Because of this it is easy for the Effutu to spiritualize concepts which to non-Effutu and non-Africans have only material values.

As far as the body is concerned, the Effutus know that the foetus begins as a result of the male sperm entering into the womb (wumbi). The child is begotten by man. But it is also created (bo) by the creator (Oboadze). They thus think of conception as a product of this combination of human and divine action. This is the reason why in their understanding of man's

⁵⁰ See also Edward B. Tylor, Primitive Culture Vol. 11. London, John Murray, p. 75 and on 'Continuance Theory'.

* See chapter 1, pp. 9-19.

⁵¹ cf. also Baeta, (1968), op. cit. p. 295.

constitution, the Effutus have no formal distinction between the mogya (the physical being) one receives from his mother and the sunsum (individual personality) one receives from his father and the Okra (soul) one receives from God. This Okra is the Creator's mark revealing a spiritual economy in which man's life and destiny gain a totally new value - a communion with God.⁵² The Okra is also that mysterious but active and vitalizing power which belongs to all men and without which neither mogya nor sunsum is effective. It is the totality of the mogya, the sunsum and the Okra that make the body which is not merely an object with which man is confronted, it is something which he himself is.⁵³ This combination makes it possible for the Effutu to think of the sacred and the secular inseparably. It follows that because a man is alive he begins to take part in activities of the religious and social life of the ebusua. He is said to be a person (nyimpa) because he belongs to the ebusua. The body is considered to be sacred⁵⁴ in Effutus'

⁵² Mircea Eliade makes a similar interesting point which tallies with that of the Effutu people. See Mircea Eliade, Patterns in Comparative Religion. N.Y., The World Publishing Co., 1958, p. 18. To this may be added P. K. Sarpong, 'The Ghanaian and Death' in Catholic Voice, XII, No. 11, Cape Coast, 1970, p. 162.

⁵³ This information was obtained from Opanyin Kwenue a herbalist at Gyanhadze, Opanyin Kow Tete of Winneba and Opanyin Kwesi Enyinda of Ateitu during the Writer's field work in September, 1983.

⁵⁴ The human body is considered to be a pusuban (the shrine of God). According to Nana Ayirebi Acquah IV the Omanhene (King of the Effutu Traditional Area, in about 1549 A.D. the Effutus gave what they considered to be the most important organ of the body to their chief god, (Penkye Otu), i.e. the heart which was regarded as the seat of the intellect power and courage. The Chief god dwells in a pusuban, shrine. The state ancestors looked upon the human body as the shrine of God. They therefore through some warnings and plagues made them put an end to the human sacrifice. This was about 1570 A.D. since then the Effutus claim in their social and religious sphere that the human body is the shrine of God. Tigers and finally deer were substituted for human sacrifice. That is why today they have what is called, 'Deer Hunting Festival'.

religious thinking. They maintain that the body becomes sacred in so far as it embodied (that is, reveals) something other than self. That other is the Creator's mark which is inseparable from mogya and sunsum. To them God never deigns to waste the strength He imparts. At death, the soul is regarded as embodied in ~~a~~ matter, and itself forming as it were the body for Nyimpo, God. The Effutus believe that it is the bodied with reference to matter; with reference to Nyimpo, it is body.⁵⁵ Opanyin Kwenue maintains that in itself the soul is formless, but it assumes a form when it is in contact with 'man' (that is mogya and sunsum). This embodied soul is similar in appearance, is identifiable with the deceased and is the very person who had undergone death and equal to the deceased mundane body of flesh and bone.

The Effutu believe that the embodied soul has the following attributes: It has life, consciousness (Knowledge and perception), and is potent, performs actions, vanishes and appears and as an embodied person participates in the affairs of the ebusua. Death does not sever the dead person's membership in the ebusua. "For it is this embodied soul notion

⁵⁵ In his book, *The Comparative Study of Religious*, Widgey makes some interesting point which tallies with that of Effutu beliefs. See Alan G. Widgey, *The Comparative Study of Religions*, London, Williams and Norgate, 1923, p. 167. It is generally held among the Akan that each day of the week is dedicated to one of the seven guardian spirits, which are believed to be the patron deities of the days of the week. They are supposed to protect the children born on the day sacred to them. According to some authors it is one of these deities, representing (Nyimpo), God, who gives the child its Okra, the soul. 'In God's presence are the seven guardians of the days of the week, and whichever of these presents the unborn before God determines both the day on which the child shall be born ...' See Taylor op. cit. p. 60. But the most common opinion, to the writer, is however, that (Nyimpo) gives the Okra as an addition to the mogya and the sunsum to form a child without the intervention of ancestors or patron deities. cf. also Evan L. R. Meyerowitz 'Concepts of the soul Among the Akan of the Gold Coast' *Africa*, 21, No. 1, 1951, pp. 24-25.

that provides the cognitive basis for the transformation of a human being into an ancestor, that supplies a thread linking the land of the living to the land of the Dead."⁵⁶ The ancestors or the 'living dead',⁵⁷ are understood by the Effutu as being able to appear as well as vanish.

There are two intriguing questions one may ask:

1. Do the living dead appear with a physical body? and
2. Is that body identical with the person deceased?

In order to answer these questions we turn to the Effutus' belief in appearances and participation.

2. Appearances:- An informant recounted how one day a nephew working in Kumasi in the Ashanti region, was paid a visit by his uncle. Spending only a day, the uncle asked for leave to continue his journey to Tamale in the Northern region of Ghana. Two days after the uncle's departure, the nephew had a telegram reporting the sudden death of the uncle. Rushing to Winneba, the nephew learned that the uncle had been buried two weeks previously. He told his people of his uncle's visit to him in Kumasi. A number of stories of this kind circulate among the Effutu people. They refer not to manifestations of souls or ghosts, but to instances in which the actual body is thought to die and come to life again. It should be noted that in nine out of ten cases, persons who die do not usually reappear to their kin but only to strangers. Only at times of crisis are they seen in human form by some old people

⁵⁶ Jack Goody Death, Property and the Ancestors, Stanford, S.U.P., 1962, p. 352.

⁵⁷ Mbiti, op. cit. p. 2, also James Haire, The Character and Theological Struggle of the Church in Halmahera, Indonesia, 1941-1979, Frankfurt-am-Main, 1981, pp. 222-227.

of the ebusua, 'sensitized to their presence'.⁵⁸

In the story above it could be noticed that this ambivalence, by which the sacred body at once attracts (appears) and repels (vanishes) suggests that the appearances of the ancestors belong in some way to a different order or being, and therefore any contact with them by the kin, (according to the people's belief), would produce an upheaval which might well prove fatal.

The ^Effutus believe that the okra in combination with mogya and sunsum make communion with God at once purer and more complete, though perfection is not of this world. From childhood to old age the body under-goes a process of change until it is perfected after death. The hierophany (i.e. okra in combination with the mogya and sunsum thus making the body sacred and perfect) of the Creator has the final victory because the okra represents a universal mode of the sacred. This brings us to the theory of idealized continuation of the body.

3. This, according to the Effutus' belief, takes the form of a place where there is a better edition of the body than that which lived on earth now, exempt from such misfortunes as (dobi) sickness, the necessity of (asumbi) working or insufficient food. The Effutus believe that the afterworld which is known as 'Nyimpo ve', (the palace of God) is said to be full of coconut-trees, sheep, cattle and all that a man would wish for⁵⁹ and

⁵⁸ See also E. B. Idowu, Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief, London, Longmans, 1956, p. 86; P. R. Mackenzie, Inter-Religious Encounter in West Africa, (Leicester Studies on Religion), Leicester, 1976, p. 30.

⁵⁹ In the Effutu land are many coconut trees, especially along the coast. Under these coconut trees, one will always see the fishermen resting after day's work.

that everyone is bright and happy with plenty of food and no work.⁶⁰ The idea of no sickness for the body after death is a further elaboration of the idealized continuation theory.

4. "If there is any natural knowledge of human immortality, it must be acquired either by intuition or by experience: there is no other way".⁶¹ The Effutus' belief in ancestors does away entirely with the concept of vague and shadowy ghostly life. They find a strong argument for immortality in the phenomenon of dreams, which are strictly a part of one's inner life. Hence when a deceased person (wumande) whom one knows to be dead appears in a dream, one naturally infers that the dead person still exists. Opanyin Kodwo Dodoo⁶² from whom this information was obtained, maintained: 'How can one see dead people, if they did not exist?' To argue that they have perished is to contradict the plain evidence of the senses, for seeing is believ^eing: That one sees the dead or the ancestor only in dreams does not shake his belief, since he thinks the appearances in dreams just as real as appearances in his waking hours. To the Effutus, these personal observations do away with the unreality of the notion of lifelessness of the 'ghost' or the ancestor and "The barrenness of his life".⁶³

⁶⁰ cf. A. E. Hunt, 'Ethnographical Notes on the Murray Islands,' Torres Straits in Journal of Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XXVIII, 1899, p. 5.

⁶¹ J. G. Frazer, The Belief in Immortality, Vol. 1, London, Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1913, p. 26.

⁶² Opanyin Kodwo Dodoo was a school master and regent of Annobil Royal Stool. He claimed to have a wide knowledge of the Effutu people. An interview with him was very educative.

⁶³ Rosalind Moss, The Life After Death in Oceania, Oxford, O.U.P., 1925, p. 135.

So far to the Effutus the following features would be ascribed to the body after death.

- (a) The body is in an environment with which it is continuous; that is, it is in some form of space not related to our space; and that it is composed of material as well as physical matter;*
- (b) It has the dispositional characteristics of the ante-mortem body; there is a sufficient correspondence of characteristics between the two; and that it has the memory traces of the ante-mortem body; again there is a sufficient continuity of memory;
- (c) It is in the same shape as the ante-mortem body.

Throughout this Chapter two senses in which it is possible to speak of both contemporary Christian and the traditional Effutu beliefs regarding the concept of bodily survival after death have been distinguished. We should now look at the conflicting areas seriatim.

1. Whereas to the contemporary Christian the body is non-physical but spiritual and that it is in no way of occupying space, the traditional Effutu on the contrary believes that the body after death is in an environment which is spatial. The body is also material and physical.

One therefore could say that the contemporary Christians who argue that the body is non-physical but spiritual have no interest in ontological questions since they might not have the conceptual tools to make philosophical distinctions. It could be argued further that since there are metaphysical implications

* Matter to the Effutus means 'sensible bodies' i.e. feelings, smelling, and everything or quality of something.

in any doctrine of resurrection the concept of 'spiritual body' could be acceptable. What the Effutus on the other hand, seem to be interested in is the question of reality. Everything that is perceived by the senses, thought, felt and dreamt, exists. Anything possessing mana therefore exists on the ontological level and for that reason is efficacious.

The Effutus' contention that seeing is believing and that they see the dead in dreams makes the assurance doubly sure that appearance of dreams is as real as seeing somebody face to face. Ancestors exist because they participate in the affairs of the ebusua.

To the Effutus, one only exists as one is in relation to other persons and things. Such relations are possible only through the body. To exist therefore is to be in a world. It is only by having a body that one can be in a world.

2. The second area of conflict concerns whether or not the embodied or disembodied existence of the dead has memory traces of the ante-mortem body. To this question what some modern Christians argue is that what remains after death is not a bodily survival but just mental images.⁶⁴ There is also a

⁶⁴ Anthropological studies have shown beyond doubt that throughout history homo sapiens has almost everywhere had the idea that something - be it soul, spirit, anima or ghost - survives the wreckage of the bodily dissolution and continues to exist whether in Hades, the Underworld, or about the grave. In a sense Christianity's affirmation of the after-life is in good company and in a tradition as old as man. But let us be warned against the easy identification of the Christian view and views revealed by anthropological studies. The latter are psychological deductions from empirical facts of human life; they are not religious in the sense of deriving from belief in God. This is the difference between the two deductions. Pobee in The Ghana Bulletin of Theology, p. 19. See also Shakespeare, Antony and Cleopatra, Act V. Scene 2, line 282. Where Cleopatra speaks for every man that "I have Immortal longings in me."

suposition that man shall live on in God's memory.⁶⁵ The Effutus, on the other hand, believe that since the ancestors are concerned with the day to day affairs of the ebusua because of their participation, hence they remember what was experienced in the past.

3. Is the post-mortem body the exact replica of the ante-mortem body is the next area of conflict.

According to the modern Christian view, there is a difference between the two. The Effutus on the other hand, by their idealized theory believe that there is a better edition of the ante-mortem body which is immune to all the misfortunes on the earth. To the Effutus, the ante-mortem body has changed, and to some extent is idealized, but not ^aradically enough to affect one's identification of it. That is, it may have some new properties such as constant health or standardized size and shape, but these would not alter its ante-mortem distinctive appearance beyond recognition. The possibility would be a second body which is very like the ante-mortem body.

At the same time, with the modern Christian view, it is also possible to claim that some particular resurrection body corresponds to an ante-mortem body when the resurrection body is 'dissimilar'. It might be so unlike the ante-mortem body that unless we had independent reasons we could never guess the relationship. This is a kind of metamorphosis of the old body. Alternatively the dissimilarity might be the destruction of the old body and the creation of a second very different body. Here questions of personal identity become difficult. We know that the butterfly was the caterpillar because there

⁶⁵ See Edwards, op. cit. p. 89; Tillich, op. cit. pp. 71-81.

has been a persistence of the same 'stuff' undergoing transformation. If an old body is destroyed and it is claimed that it 'is' this radically different body, we want to know **what** it is that has changed. There is a warning here, that is, for those who attempt to answer such a question often invoke some form of dualism: the 'real' thing is not the body.

We have seen that the western man, with his heritage of Greek philosophy which divides (as seen in chapter 2), man into body, mind and soul, is faced with a difficulty when coming to study Effutu-African concepts of man. He is immediately tempted to fit all information into his own preconceived philosophical categories. However, such an approach is fatal, since the African does not express his ideas in such philosophical concept. ^{There} ~~It~~ is therefore bound to be conflicts. These conflicts about bodily survival after death we have examined. Yet considering the Christian and the Effutu traditionally there are some similarities (i.e. like with like). These are:

1. Traditionally both the Christian and the Effutu believe that the living-dead has a body. This is evidenced by the resurrection of Jesus and when he appeared to his apostles; and also evidenced by the story of the uncle who appeared to his nephew at Kumasi.
2. Another similarity is that traditionally both the Christian and the Effutu believe that the ante-mortem body is very much like the body after death. Yet the body after death could undergo a change and that it could vanish and appear. Here one could easily say that the body could be 'spiritual' according to the Christian and 'sunsum',⁶⁶ according to the Effutu.

⁶⁶ There are two understanding in the Effutu usage of sunsum. One is that part of the father in the conception of a child as seen earlier, and another means something spiritual i.e. supernatural. A body which could appear and vanish could therefore be said to be supernatural.

3. Suffice to say that by the Effutus' concept of the bodily survival after death, it goes to prove and support to a greater extent the traditional Christian understanding of the bodily survival after death - 'I believe in ... the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting'. (The Apostles' Creed). Eternal life is a quality of life to be entered into now (John 17:3). The idea of eternal life and life everlasting simply say that life in relation to God has unlimited value⁶⁷ and that the value is embodied in unlimited existence. The belief in the after-life /body/ is a corollary of the belief in the sovereign heavenly Father. "God by his will and sovereign power recreates men after death in another sphere of being, bestowing upon them a

⁶⁷ Christianity's claims that life has a meaning comes under attack from time to time. For example, the atheist existentialist Paul Sartre says of death "the absurd character of death" (P. Sartre, Being and Nothingness, London, 1957, p. 533). He meant that death often strikes men mid-career, leaving their work unfinished. Such arbitrary destruction vitiates the meaning of life. "Thus death is never that which gives life its meaning: it is on the contrary, that which on principle removes all meaning from life". (Ibid. p. 539). In this attitude he is a shade more radical than the biblical writer, Ecclesiastes. Ecclesiastes finds existence meaningless, a barren cycle in which effort is unavailing. The difference between Ecclesiastes and Sartre is that whereas the latter categorically rejected any meaning to life, Ecclesiastes on the other hand, is rather open on the issue saying that if there is a Divine purpose for life, then it has been deliberately kept from men. (Eccles. 3:11; 8:17; 11:5). Fobee, op.cit. p. 19.

new life which is not a natural immortality but a free gift of the Creator".⁶⁸ This hope in the after-life is the secret of Christianity's moral dynamism. The future hope of the resurrection of the body is the sanction and the incentive of all good life on earth.⁶⁹

It should be acknowledged here that the concept, 'resurrection of the body' is very difficult for Western Christians. This is because (a) the knowledge that the body disintegrates on death and (b) the fact that the traditional Christian (Hellenistic) body/soul dichotomy has been found both biblically unsound and philosophically tenuous (even though it is still implied in many funeral liturgies). Nevertheless, belief in the 'resurrection of the body' as well as in the 'communion of saints', is not abandoned, but often re-interpreted as the survival (as a gift of God) of personality in identifiable forms.

It is from within the framework of traditional Effutu belief that the Effutu convert most easily understands the resurrection of Jesus the Christ. The Effutu convert therefore becomes convinced that all evidences go to prove that the belief in the Messiah would have died out without the living Jesus - (the Greatest of all Ancestors) and that the gold of the Words of Jesus would have been buried in the dust of oblivion. The greatest of all men would have passed away and left no trace; his cause would have begotten no religious exaltation. The

⁶⁸ J. Hick, 'Towards a Christian Theology of Death' in Dying, Death and Disposal, ed. G. Cope, London, 1970, p. 16. W. Kunneth, The Theology of the Resurrection, London, 1965; W. R. Mathews, The Hope of Immortality, London, 1936; J. Bailie, And the Life Everlasting, Oxford, 1934; O. Cullmann, Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Dead?, London 1958; H. E. Fosdick, The Assurance of Immortality, London (1918).

⁶⁹ Pobee, op. cit. p. 19.

evidence that he was alive was therefore given by his own
impulsion and by the will of God.

The concept of bodily continuity after death and the desire
for a better existence leading to the theory of idealized
continuation, according to which the human body is regarded as
sacred and therefore thought of as good and important in this
life becomes better in the hereafter, has consequently given
rise to conflicts with the practice and belief of the Christian
Church in Effutu land in particular and Ghana in general.

It is to these conflicts which are found within the
framework of funeral practice that we now turn.

CHAPTER IV

FUNERAL PRACTICE - BURIAL AND CRISIS.

In the last chapter we discussed how the Effutu convert with his traditional background conceived the body after death as against the modern Christian understanding of the bodily survival after death. We saw how the Effutus regarded the body as sacred and thus thought of it as very important. We have also seen the 'real' links between both the ante and post-mortem body. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the rites de passage by which the passage of the living to the dead is ritualized by the Effutu people. This is a universal function of funerary rites de passage but in this case these rites have an added significance in that the rites are seen to be theologically in conflict with the beliefs and practices of the Christian Church.

The following are therefore going to be considered:

- (a) An account of traditional Effutu funeral practice;
- (b) Specific objections by the Christian missionaries;
- (c) What is now the normal Christian funeral practice in a contemporary context and
- (d) The Church's Objections, Criticism of;

a. The Traditional Effutu funeral practice:

The ceremonies observed upon occasions of death occupy a large portion of the Effutu people's attention. If, for instance, the head of a family is about to die, he summons his relatives around his death-bed. He instructs them about the state of his affairs, and how his property was acquired, and how it is to be disposed of. He is most particular to furnish them with proofs respecting the acquisition of his wealth and whatever property

he has acquired or inherited as the Ebusuapanyin, (head of the family) mentioning the names of the witnesses to the transactions, the circumstances under which they took place, and the sums paid for them, in order that his successor may be enabled to defend his rights. He also recounts the names of his debtors, with the sums which they owe to him as well as the debts which he owes to others.¹ His death-bed declarations, made in the presence of responsible witnesses, are always received as evidence in the event of subsequent litigation. Having made these arrangements, he calmly resigns himself to death. In most cases when anyone is about to die, the watchers by the death-bed are expected, to pour a little water down the throat of the person who is dying with these words: "Osimesi, wolawom, so onuto m'nuu no mpamani mbusu na esian fuu, no ane ase muane amunya nyeebi su nane/
Osimesi gye nsu yi nom erokor yi, pam hen mbusu biara. Na ma mbaa nyinara nya mba (so-and-so receive this water and drink, and do not permit any evil thing to come whence you are setting out, and permit all the women to bear children)".²

An Effutu lives in dread of 'passing over' without someone to perform this last pious rite and it is considered a disgrace to relatives to have omitted to do so. This is

¹ cf. The manner in which Jacob on his death-bed instructs his sons respecting the nature of their right to the cave in the field of Machpelah, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite, from the children of Heth. This is an excellent illustration of the kind of custom practised by the Effutu people. Vide also Genesis XLIX, 28, 32.

² For what other Akan people say see R. S. Rattray, Religion and Art in Ashanti; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927, pp. 148-149.

the reason why an old Effutu of any standing will seldom set out, even on a very short journey, unless accompanied by a child or an attendant, who would be ready to perform this duty should death suddenly overtake him. The Effutu people declare that in order to reach nsama sisi/samando (place of ancestors) or the palace of God 'a steep hill must be climbed'. They see the dying man panting for breath, and think of his 'soul' struggling up some steep incline, and this draught of water is to speed him to his journey. No sooner has the breath left the body than a loud wailing lamentation is heard proceeding from the house. The women rush to the streets with disordered dress and dishevelled hair. The dead body which is considered to be the pusuban of Nyimpó (God), now becomes the property of the ebusua (family). There is an Effutu - Akan proverb: Oba sese naaso obo ne na n'ebusua.³ ('However much the child may resemble the father yet he or she belongs to the mother's ebusua'). The consequence is that though one belongs to his or her father's asafo company, yet when one dies one's mother's ebusua takes full responsibility for the dead body. If a man living with his children and wife dies, the death is first reported to the head of the family, the ebusuapanyin who in turn summons the other elders together to decide on procedure. They then send out to the Ebusua of the widow 'Nkaansa' (usually a bottle of alcoholic spirit signifying an official announcement of the death). Every

³ For importance of Proverbs see James Boyd Christensen, "The Role of Proverbs in Fante Culture" in Africa XXVIII, 1959, pp. 232-243; William R. Bascom, 'Verbal Art', Journal of American Folklore, LXVIII (1955) pp. 2445-52; J. G. Christaller, Twi Nmbusem Mperisa Ahansia Mmaono, Basel, 1879; R. S. Rattray, Ashanti Proverbs, Oxford, (1916).

action taken is between ebusua and ebusua and not individuals. Preparations are then made for washing the body.⁴ Every ebusua has a special group or relatives whose task is to take good care of the body. They wash the body with hot water, a new sponge, and a new towel. Rum is often poured down the throat with the idea of staying the process of decomposition.

It should be noted that the funeral ceremonies in the Effutu Traditional Area appear to have undergone some changes since the natives came into contact with Europeans. Formerly, the bodies of their dead were embalmed and wrapped in mats and kept in their houses for a considerable time before disposal by earth burial. But latterly (i.e. since 1946) the people have adopted the custom of keeping their dead in cold storage provided by the Government for a fee.⁵

The body is dressed out with great care in the richest robes of the deceased, and adorned with a variety of golden ornaments and beads. Among some very rich ebusua and also depending upon the status of the deceased, gold dust is often put into its ears, and into the hollow above the 'zygomatic arch' known as sika gu bea (the place for pouring gold dust).⁶

⁴ During the Writer's field work in September, 1983, there was an opportunity of witnessing a corpse being washed. It was very fascinating. The washers were very careful in handling the dead body. As a sign of respect a bottle of Akpeteshi (a native drink) had to be bought for libation. They asked the dead not to be annoyed with the writer's presence.

⁵ The increase in hospital charges since July, 1985 has raised the storage fee to about a thousand cedis (¢1,000.00) per day. There is a possibility of a further increase.

⁶ Rattray also mentions a similar practice, among the Ashanti people. See Rattray, op. cit. p. 149.

Often, money or gold dust is bound up in a small pocket and tied to the loin cloth.⁷ Other gifts are cloths and blankets, Taylor explains why among the Akan in general, some objects are chosen to be given to the dead. "Possessions may also be regarded as imbued with the selfhood of their owner, particularly those, like ... sleeping-mat or shirt which are impregnated with perspiration or dirt from his body itself. These were the articles which were commonly buried with a man rather than his more valuable but less intimate possessions".⁸ Why after all do they make these gifts to the dead. The ebusuapanyin Kow Damtse explains that there is the belief that the dead will need these things in the place to which the dead is going.⁹ Generally,

⁷ According to Ebusuapanyin Kow Damtse, the Effutu people believe that the dead man has a journey to make to the palace of God which is usually known as the spiritual world or next world (Nyimpo Ye) which is separated from this world by the river of death. At the river the dead is ferried across, for a fee. The belief in a river which divides the land of the living from that of the dead across which a 'spirit' has to be ferried bears a remarkable resemblance to Greek and other mythologies, so that the view of many early writers, that such similarities could only have arisen by diffusion from 'higher cultures', is understandable. But even if such a hypothesis were acceptable, and there are a number of reasons why it should be rejected, this would leave the core of the problem untouched, that is, why in so many societies we should find the land of the living separated from the land of the dead by a river of similar stretch of water. Moreover, in this part of Africa all journeys of any length include the crossing of a river done by canoe. cf. Goody, op. cit. pp. 371-374.

⁸ Taylor, op. cit. p. 64.

⁹ For what other Akan people believe see, P. K. Sarpong, 'The Sacred Stools of Ashanti' in Anthropos, LXII, 1967, p. 13. See also E. G. Parrinder, African Traditional Religion, 2nd ed. London, 1962, p. 99 "These are meant for the use of the deceased on his journey to the world beyond, and so that he should not appear before the ancestors empty-handed". Unlike the Effutu people some Akan tribes place some food before the corpse, see Rattray, op. cit. p. 158.

the deceased hands are folded against the cheek and sometimes with a silk handkerchief between them to wipe off the sweat that comes upon them in climbing the hill.

Thus apparelled, the body is then either propped up in a chair or sofa or laid on an iron bed. The respect thus shown to the body indicates belief in a firm continuity between the natural and the "spiritual body".

The dead person is now ready to receive the visits of those who come to pay their last respects. Relations, friends, and neighbours crowd to the house of mourning, and consider it necessary as they approach to join in the universal wailing.¹⁰ Gun shots are fired, to which several explanations are given. According to Onipa Kodwo Sei, some think it to be done to announce somebody's death, others take the gun-shots to be salutes, whilst others in their turn are of the opinion that the shots are fired to announce to wumandé (those in samando - the place of the dead) that somebody is on his or her way to them. They speak to and address the dead person sometimes in accents of reproach for leaving them, at others, beseeching his 'spirit' to watch over and protect them from evil. There are also verbal expressions in dirges and song laments.¹¹

When a member of the Twidan ebusua (Leopard clan) dies they scratch the picture of a leopard on the wall of the house and on the coffin, and the mourners make spots on their bodies with red, white and black clay to represent a leopard. They

¹⁰ cf. also Cruickshank, op. cit. p. 216.

¹¹ See appendix C for the dirges and the song laments found to be the general text of the Akan.

also put spots on the neck of the corpse, for it is believed that if this is not done the deceased will become a leopard.¹²

Also the Nsona (crow) clan during funeral celebration put white clay or white cloth round their necks. This clan respects the crow which in West Africa has a white band round its neck. Aburadzi or Plantain clan on the death of one of their ebusua cut up plantain and throw the pieces on the road. Konafo or Buffalo clan make a cross of red clay on their heads.¹³

Mourning band (abotsir) are fastened round the head. The whole ebusua, neighbours and friends and whoever attends the funeral are expected to wear mourning cloths or band when a death occurred in the household. The mourning cloth must be black.¹⁴ This mourning cloth is associated with a deeply rooted fear of the dead returning. When veiled and cloacked in black, the living are thought to be invisible to the dead, and this was especially so when the dead used to be buried at night as at one time they were. Since black symbolizes night, and is really an absence of colour, it is best fitted to express mourning. Mourning is obligatory and if the customs are not complied with, it is reckoned to be a sign of serious disrespect.

A 'wake' is now kept, night and day, until the body is

¹² In endeavouring to ascertain the authenticity of this practice, the writer was told that it is still extant, though it has lost its former hold.

¹³ For further interesting illustration see C. Harper et al. 'Notes on Totemism of the Gold Coast' in J AL Vol. XXXVI, p. 183. There are no marks or signs which distinguish the clans from one another, nor are there any initiatory rites. Some of the chiefs and wealthier natives use the clan totem as a badge, and put the skin on drums, canes stools etc. There are no special dances. To find out the clan to which a person belongs, you must ask him.

¹⁴ Nowadays some people are fond of wearing Koben (a reddish cloth) or edinkra cloths when death occurs.

buried. The whole time is spent in firing of guns by the Asafo company to which the deceased belongs through agnatic kinship. There is also drumming and dancing to the praise of God and singing by the orchestral group, the Adowa. The Asafo company also displays some Asafo flags and other appurtenances and relics amidst asafo songs.

There are various obligations on members of the kinship group. The 'mbabanyin' (the male children of the deceased) provide the coffin for their father plus the Adaka ntaso/nsido¹⁵ (money for the expenses incurred on behalf of the ebusua and the shroud). The ebusua must serve drinks to all who come to the funeral. Then comes the Nkradzi (the formal bidding of farewell to the deceased). The ceremony marks only the physical parting and not the end of spiritual presence.

During the Nkradzi each person approaches the dead in turn in the customary manner with his or her donation. The theme of all the addresses to the deceased is the same: "Let your family have long life and health. May we get money to pay for your funeral. Do not let any of us fall sick. May the women bear children. Give us good dreams and do not frighten us".¹⁶

A detail which the writer may not withhold is that if he or she belongs to an association e.g. music, masonry, carpentry or traders union, it is the members' duty to perform nkradzi

¹⁵ If the children are well trained and educated by the father, the 'Adaka/Ntaso' (Nsido) amounts to a fortune. This money also helps the ebusua to defray some of the funeral expenses. The action of the children increases the deceased's esteem in the community. It is said that the joy of fatherhood after death depends upon the 'Adaka Ntaso'.

¹⁶ Although a general phenomenon in Akan societies, this account pertains to the death of E.P. at Nsuekyir during the writer's field work in September, 1983.

along with each association's customary ethos in his honour. After the donation rites, the Ebusuapanyin calls for the attention of the gathering and addresses them with these words: Ane osam ledi nkra/'Ye enye osam no ribedzi nkra' ('The time for bidding farewell or parting the physical company of the deceased is about to begin'). Thereupon the Ebusuapanyin or his representative - the Ebusuakyeame (linguist) - proceeds to pour a libation. In the writer's experience at funeral gathering at Winneba, Sankor and Nsuekyir, the following was discovered to be a typical text for 'nkradzi':

Woafa na onfo, ahwehwe lapo no
to woafa wo dewu a nde wolawom
dei foo. Se soko na mobo wo a
nde mma oso nsu mu. Bo moko.

which literally means:

Our royal brother, as you are going,
if this death is your own death, then
sleep soundly. If on the other hand
somebody caused your death do not drink
any water. Retaliate.

As soon as the body is put into a coffin, the Asafo Company carries the coffin from the house of the deceased, along the main roads and making detours to go through important areas¹⁷ in the city or town or village so that maximum display can be achieved. Interested people, usually women, follow the Asafo

¹⁷ The Asafo company visits as many houses of the captains (asafohenfo) of the company and some elders of the town or city or village, as they possibly can. This is a bidding farewell by the deceased. This action is also considered to pay respect to the people visited. This asafo-funeral custom is peculiar for the Effutu people who are also known for their peculiar festival - the 'Deer Hunting Festival'. This Asafo-funeral ceremony has been traced back into neolithic age. According to Nana Ayirebi Acquah IV - the King of Effutu Traditional Area, the ancestors of the Effutu people who lived in the syro-Phoenician area (in the 10th C, A.D.) practised this, though he was unable to produce any documentary evidence and it is obviously certain that the obscurity is due to illiteracy of the forebears.

while others wait at the communal burying ground. The ceremonies of the Asafo consist of processions and dancing accompanied by drumming, horn blowing and also gun-firing which is one of the essential parts of any funeral in the Effutu area. Just before the grave is closed an elderly member of the ebusua of the deceased steps forward, and addresses the dead in the following words:

Nde olawo
Anitu itur
Anemo ito nnaw
Anenaw mbamba,
Anebo woedi fessaw
Mma ana osankwafo edo,
Na amenya apeako
Ka wu dewu ko fuu
Na ane dor.¹⁸

This is literally translated as follows:

To day you go
We have fired guns
We have bought sheep
We have brought clothes
We have made a fine funeral
Do not let any one fall ill
Let us get money to pay for the
expenses we have made
Life to us all,
let all be fertile.

From the prayer it is clear that the departed are expected to fulfill their obligations towards their ebusuafo. The blood-relatives perform this rite for two reasons - fear and sympathy. Both these factors explain their solicitude. "Their attitude might best be described in the psychological term 'ambivalent', as compounded of both fear and affection".¹⁹

¹⁸ This was what was said at the burial of one Kwame Awotwe of Winneba on 18th February, 1985. This was during the writer's field work.

¹⁹ Refer also E. G. Parrinder, African Traditional Religion, 2nd edition, London 1962, p. 59.

A few personal belongings are put into the grave for the deceased to use on his journey to 'the palace of God', and then earth is shovelled over. Green leaves or branches, symbolising a continuation of life, are piled over and around the grave. All who have helped in the burial, after leaving the graveyard, rush to the sea and wash their hands and faces with the seawater. Before they have done this they may not touch anything, nor may they return to their houses. In towns and villages remote from the sea mourners wash their hands and faces in a can of mixture of salt and water, for salt or salt and water is a regular specific against haunting spirits,²⁰ as well as being a purifier.

After the burial the members of the ebusua are left alone. A goat or sheep known as ebusuaguan, 'the sheep to accompany the deceased', is slaughtered. The meat is distributed to all the key relatives. This signifies solidarity in the ebusua and also a tribute to the dead. On the eighth day (Ndaawotwe) after the burial, the ebusuafo meet again to fix the time for final funeral rite.

The Effutus view funeral practices and especially final funeral obsequies as an event of paying the last and befitting respect to the dead but more importantly as a duty to the living and the dead. They are symbols of continuity of life. The belief that death is not the cessation of life is symbolized in the performance and celebration of the funeral rites.

Funerals then are meant to honour the particular deceased

²⁰ It is the custom of the Effutu people to mix white-washing powder with salt and water to white-wash the dead man's room before anyone occupies it. This is considered as purification and also as protection against spirits.

persons whose deaths have occasioned them. They also honour all the dead who are thought to have led such a good life that they are believed to be where all good dead people go. Furthermore, funerals are a foretaste of the living's own funeral.²¹ The meticulous observance of the rites connected with the funeral becomes a necessity. If the dead are still living in the 'other world' as they believe, with Supreme Being (Onyankopon) and participate in the life of this world then it becomes important to maintain a favourable relationship with them. The maintenance of the existing bond of union is expressed in the celebration of the funeral rites and all activities connected with them. Should an aspect of the funeral celebration be ignored without a legitimate cause and an alternative procedure made to accommodate it, the funeral is considered incomplete. In 1971, (14 July) in Winneba, a particular funeral celebration of safohen (captain) Kwesi Gyete Tieko of Nsona ebusua was not completed on the scheduled fortieth day (ndaduanan) due to cholera which affected the whole township. It therefore became necessary for the final rites to be postponed for three months. When Ebusuapanyin, Kweku Bondzi (the head of the clan) was interviewed as to the reasons for such a long delay, he explained that for the ebusua not to have postponed the final funeral rites and cancelled it entirely on account of the unfortunate epidemic would have been tantamount to a dereliction of duty and disrespect by the living to the departed.

²¹ See also P. Sarpong, 'Some Sociological Reflection on Death', The Ghana Bulletin of Theology, Vol. 3, No. 9, December, 1970, p. 3.

When the 'fortieth day' (adaduanan) after the burial is approaching, preparations are made for the final funeral rite. This is known as Eyiye, (that is giving the dead the last rite of honour and also wiping out any debt which may be due on account of the death). Failure to observe it may bring about misfortune: illness, barrenness in the ebusua, a diminished catch of fish, a farming accident, even death. There is also a belief that if the dead person is not appeased by this last ceremony he may become dangerous.

The final funeral rites start on a Friday night with the following Saturday as the final rites day. A wake (pesi) or vigil takes place. It is during this time that anansesem (folk-stories) are told by some folk-story experts.

It is also on this Friday, the wake-keeping day, that the special part taken by the widow or widows, (if the deceased has more than one wife),²² in funeral rites take place. The Effutu people call a widow okunawo, literally one in a state of kuna, 'widowhood'.²³ Before the burial the widow (or widows) remains beside the body or sleeping under the bed of the husband day and night until he is buried. At night the body is always guarded by a bright lamp placed on a table or hangs at the head of the bed. The widow's position is one of great danger during this

²² The Effutu people are mostly polygamous. This will be treated later (in the thesis).

²³ The period of widowhood rites - kunaye - is to restrain the widow or widower from doing anything rash such as committing suicide. The period also gives the widow or widower the time to reconcile the inevitable with the evitable but most of all to restrain a person from going against the rules of sexual intercourse. More will be discussed later.

period, for it is thought that should the sunsum or the spirit of the deadman return and have sexual intercourse with her, she would ever after be barren.²⁴ Before the burial the widow sits beside the husband's body, fanning away the flies and sleeps beside it when she is exhausted. The widow remains in the dead husband's house till after the final funeral rites. During all this time she neglects her person and eats most sparingly. On the Friday of the 'wake' at about midnight the widow is taken by the women-folk of the deceased to the sea. The party is led by a torch-bearer - an old widower with a warning cry: Wonnhyia O! Wonnhyia O!! Wonnhyia O!! (It is forbidden to meet us). It is a taboo for anyone to meet them hence this warning cry, while the widow carries the widow's pot kunakutu which contains burning amme and nunum leaves. Opanyin Kow Amansuon, much experienced in this rite, maintains that when they reach the shore the widow throws the pot into the sea and has a complete seabath as a purification. She then returns home immaculately clean. This ends the first part of the widowhood. Widowhood rites, providing a period of purification are strongly supported by public opinion in Effutu area.

The wake before the day of the final funeral rites is also accompanied by drumming, singing as well as by much drinking. This is partly to show how hospitable the ebusua is and partly for the functional reason of the often inclement weather!!

On the following day, i.e. Saturday, for the final funeral rites, the ebusua sits in state with its insignia of the totem of

²⁴ See also Rattray, op. cit. p. 171. In the case of a widower he is expected to abstain from sexual intercourse with any other wife or wives for fifteen days after death: *ibid*, p. 151. This applies very much to the Effutu widower also.

the ebusua. At this time a present is given as a mark of commiseration or as a contribution towards the family by each member of the community participating in the final obsequies. In fact considerable sums are received at this time of the funeral but these are often entirely spent on the funeral festivities. At all events, they are seldom a source of gain, as it is expected that the receiver will make similar presents to the donor²⁵ upon the occasion of death in his family.

During this final funeral rite, drum music plays a leading part. There are many different drums for varying purposes. The Asafo companies all have their own drums. The most important drums are atumpan or 'talking drums'²⁶ and the fontomfrom, the large state drums.²⁷ The 'talking drums' stand on the ground and are played as a pair by one drummer; one drum is the male and the other the female, giving low and high notes respectively, the combination of which gives the sound of words

²⁵ For example, there is the Fish Sellers' Union consisting entirely of women, which seems mainly to be concerned with funerals. Members pay an entrance fee and when a member dies, contributions are raised for the funeral and the Union presents sums of money to the relatives of the deceased and liquid refreshment to the mourners. The Foodstuffs Sellers' Union, also composed mainly of women, serves various economic purposes and also settles disputes among its members as well as giving help to funerals. See also Busia op. cit. p. 56; Kenneth Little, "The Study of Social Change in British West Africa in Africa, XXII, 1953, p. 237. There are also numerous other associations in Effutu Traditional Area concerned specifically with mutual benefit and the funeral ceremonies of their members. A person joining one of these benefit societies may nominate a relative as beneficiary, if he wishes, or he may draw out the money himself. A person joining a burial society pay, say, two thousand cedis as an entrance fee, (this varies) per month and the group helps him to meet the funeral expenses of his relatives. "The members of the group also commemorate a deceased person by wearing cloth of the same colour" Little, op. cit. p. 227.

²⁶ cf. Kwame Frimpong, "The Final Obsequies of the Late Nana Sir Ofori Atta, K.B.E., Abuakwaahene" in Africa, XV, 1945, p. 81.

²⁷ According to Uncle Kodwo Sei as popularly known, a chief fontomfrom drummer at Winneba, these large drums are usually used for Chiefs' funeral. This information was obtained during the writer's field work in February, 1985 at Winneba.

and sentences in the Effutu language. In this way the drums do actually 'talk', though their scope is largely limited to set pieces concerned with the history of the bereaved ebusua and the deeds of the dead and the living. These drum recitals of ancestral history always play a large part in any tribal ceremony but particularly at funerals.

In this ceremony the ebusua slaughter goats, sheep or cows. There are no hard and fast rules about the matter. The ebusua kill what they can afford. A great feast is held in the honour of the dead and it is regarded as a point of honour to feed the mourners as well as can possibly be managed, with much beer or palmwine. It is at this time that the people listen to the commemorative orations which are also invocations. The magnitude of the feast will also depend on the kind of life the dead has lived; the number of children he has, how well he has trained his children and how many possessions he has left behind.

It is therefore the wish and the aim of every Effutu to be a man of good character and to marry as many wives as he can according to his economic resources. He is to train his children - by teaching them how to fish or farm or by putting them to school so that they may get good employment as good civil servants or businessmen. It is also the aim of the father to own great possessions so that he can bequeath them to his children to give them a sound start in life. With these provisions made, a father at death receives great honour. The joy in the midst of grief is translated into a great feast.

After the feast the ebusua announce the next of kin who is usually a brother or a very close relative of the deceased, and he takes over the general responsibility for the children's

welfare, regardless of who rears them. They may seek his aid if they are in difficulties. Should it happen one of the children needs a large sum of money to pay a fine or to start business, it is to this man they will turn.²⁸

No economic provision is made for the widow,²⁹ as it is assumed that if she does not remarry her children or siblings will look after her.³⁰ In most cases the next of kin marries the widows or widow with the intention of having a good oversight of the children. On the other hand the man could allow the widow to remarry - to a man of her choice, though sometimes a number of years elapse before a widow takes a second husband.³¹

When a widow is ready to leave her dead husband's house after she had been confined for some period of time (at any time after the final rites) she is again bathed in 'emme' herbs as before. It is believed that this 'emme' has power to drive off the spirits of the dead. She then needs no longer fear the jealousy of the dead husband, for the Effutu believe that the dead apparently are capable of emotions and can therefore be

²⁸ See also Esther M. Goody, Context of Kinship, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1973, p. 154.

²⁹ The Provisional National Defence Council (P.N.D.C.) the Government of Ghana since July, 1985 has put forward a proposal that at the death of a father or mother, his or her property should be divided into three. The spouse and the children should take two thirds whilst the rest goes to the ebusua. This proposal is being discussed on the radio and television every now and then. What is now happening, from the writer's personal interviews, is that those with matrilineal system of inheritance are not in favour with the proposal, for the fear that patrilineal system of inheritance is going to prevail in Ghana. Refer P.N.D.C. Law 114, 1985. On the question of testacy or intestacy see N. A. Ollenu, The Law of Succession In Ghana, Presbyterian Book Depot, Accra, 1960, p. 53. To this may be added P. A. Owiredu, "The Akan System of Inheritance Today and Tomorrow", African Affairs LVIII, 1959, pp. 161-165.

³⁰ Refer Ibid.

³¹ See also Goody, op. cit. p. 154.

jealous. The dead are as jealous as the living, hence the bathing with the emme¹. This rite of bathing the widow is the second and the last stage of the widow's special part in the funeral rite.

After the long day's ceremonies and the subsequent introduction of the next of kin to the public, the ebusua and the community as a whole, gather together to finalize the public celebration climaxing in pouring of the final libation called nsagu. The Ebusuapanyin in pouring the final libation speaks and addresses both Onyankopon (God) and the deceased person.³² After the speech, about four or five senior kinsmen make similar orations one after another. They harangue the dead. They tell him that when his daughters are married he will receive the first drink of their bride-price. They ask him to be a good wumandé and not to trouble them. His kinship is now with God and also with them. They also point out to the dead man that his peers are present to honour him. They implore God that he might sleep quietly and his 'soul' be 'cool'. Their remarks also contain many reflections on life and human destiny and the transience of all living things, and they recount the deeds of the dead man and reiterate that he had left sons to carry on his name and lineage. After all have spoken, the Ebusuapanyin pours the (rum) libation and this ends the final funeral rites.

³² See Appendix D for the speech and the addresses.

As ceremonies at birth, puberty or marriage are characterized by happiness and laughter, the funeral ceremony is one of deep silence and sadness in the midst of drumming and dancing and firing of guns. The final funeral rites are considered absolutely essential by the Effutu people. The funeral rites show how important the body is to the Effutu people. The Effutus treat the body with no contempt. They do not construe the body as an outer man in which dwells or clothes or as integument of the soul.³³ The full rites de passage therefore imply a ceremony involving the society, then a ceremony involving the moral kinship society, which ultimately means reducing the deadman to a part of the Effutu model of an ideal society. Again throughout the funeral rites the place of the body as an integral constituent of man's nature; and the fact that man does not have a body - he is a body; he is flesh-activated by soul - mogya and sunsum, the whole conceived as a psycho-physical unit, is insisted on.

The major activities like drumming, gunfiring, dancing, pouring of libation and widowhood spring from the Effutu people's conception of the universe, and in particular from their belief in an after life as discussed in Chapter 3. They believe in the visitations of the dead, in invisible participation of the dead in the life of this world of ours and in the continuation of ties of kinship after death. Consequently, the living are anxious to keep up good relations with the dead, to remember them, to show concern for them, to identify themselves with them and to ask

³³ See Chapter 3.

their favours. Nevertheless death is regarded as a happy or welcome event (though for the 'fact' of physical separation the rites involved bring about sadness). There is, tremendous respect for customs and tradition. Funerals then become the means of honouring the dead for whom the rites are performed. In traditional Effutu society, the present life of the people, their norms of behaviour, customary beliefs, attitudes, and values have come down to them with as little modification as possible from time immemorial. "All important aspects of cultural life are protected by religious sentiment, and great store is set on social conformity".³⁴ The existence of a traditional culture particularly funeral rites depends on the existence of a community, that is, the kind of society in which there is intimate face-to-face relationship and co-operation among people permanently resident in a single locality and who as a result experience what C. H. Cooley calls "a certain fusion of individuality in a common whole, so that one's very self, for many purposes at least, is the common life and purpose of the group".³⁵ In fact the welfare of the group or community 'the greatest good of the greatest number' subordinates the individual.³⁶ Funeral celebrations are, therefore, the concern of all.

³⁴ Emm. Obiechina, Culture, Traditions and Society in the West African Novel, Cambridge O.U.P., 1975, p. 202.

³⁵ C. H. Cooley, Social Organization, New York; Schocken Books, 1962, p. 23.

³⁶ See ^{nes C.} Agnes L. Donohugh, "Essentials of African Culture", in Africa VIII, 1935, p. 333.

b. The Objections of the Christian Church/Missionaries:

It is evident that there is a crisis in the Christian Churches' missionary Vocations³⁷ in Ghana. The number of those who are ready to engage in the missionary activity of the Church is on the decline. For this fact there are of course, many reasons, but in the writer's opinion, one of the main reasons is that the motivation which prompted many to become missionaries in the past, has lost its appeal. Yet it is true that, at present that non-christian religions are regarded as "paganish". It is also equally true that non-christian religions are negatively estimated as 'primitive'. This is prevalent among Christians,³⁸ and this idea of other religions has inspired many to become missionaries. Such a negative view of other religions is based on the assumption that there is an unsurmountable discontinuity between God's universal, salvific will and the Judaeo-Christian history of salvation.³⁹ For instance, the pouring of libation, drumming and overall beliefs and practices observed by the Effutu/Akan during funeral celebration are objected to by the Christian churches. This is because in preaching what the Church believed to be the truth concerning Jesus Christ, the Christian Churches saw conflicts between what they understood to be Christian beliefs and practices with

³⁷ Refer H. Gravand, Meeting the African Religions, Rome, 1968, pp. 150-151.

³⁸ J. Boelaers, "Authentieke religieuze Waarden in 'primievie' Culturen," in Het Missiewerk, XLVI, 1967, p. 131; F. De Graeve, Vaticanum 2 en apostolische dialoog met niet - Christelijke godsdiensten in G. C. Anawati e.a. Missionaire wegen voor morgen, Hilversum, 1967, p. 16; J. Neuner, Christelijk Getuigenis, in De missionerende kerk coll. Vaticanum 2, 3, Hilversum, 1967, p. 188; H. R. Schlette, Enige Stellingen over Het zelfbegrip van de theologie ten overstaan van de godsdiensten in God en Wereld, 2, Hilversum-Antwerpen, 1965, p. 29.

³⁹ A Camps, De missionerende Kerk en haar verhouding tot de niet-christelijke godsdiensten, vroeger en nu, in Het Missiewerk, XLIV, 1965, pp. 141-156.

traditional Effutu/Akan beliefs and practices. Practices such as drumming, dancing and pouring of libation seemed incompatible with Christian belief and had to be condemned.⁴⁰ The Christian Church has frowned upon drumming and traditional dancing on the grounds that they were often associated with paganish elements in traditional life which were repugnant to Christian feeling.⁴¹ Again from the side of the Church, it was felt that the issue with the pouring of libation lay in the sense of dependence: does it accord to the ancestors power which they do not possess and honour which they do not merit and thus deny the first commandment? The Church maintains that all honour and glory go to God but not the ancestors.

Consequently, the effect of conversion was to alienate the converts from their traditional loyalty to the dead and with that went, for them at any rate, the strongest sanction for individual action, social attitudes and behaviour. The collective conscience is split and the community could no longer speak with one voice.

The early Effutu Christian converts neither appealed to clan solidarity nor responded to its appeal. As neophytes, they were obsessed with their own importance and contemptuous of all non-initiates. They called themselves people of the Church and the non-Christians 'the people of nothing' or (when they felt more generous) 'the people of the world' (wiadzefo).

⁴⁰ cf. F. K. Sarpong, "African values and Catechetics" in Teaching all Nations, Vol. 4, 1967, p. 167.

⁴¹ See also J. S. Pobee, 'Funerals in Ghana', The Ghana Bulletin of Theology, V. 4, No. 5, December, 1973, p. 27.

In order to dissuade Effutu Christian members from participating in drumming, dancing and pouring of libation during funeral celebrations, the Methodist Church in the Effutu Traditional Area for instance in 1977 introduced what is known as the Etwapar⁴² funeral celebrations. According to the writer's informant, The Rt. Rev. S. B. Assamuah,⁴³ this 'Etwapar' started in the Effutu Traditional Area a short time before the death of the late Nana Ghartey V - (the Omanhen, King of the Effutu Traditional Area, who died in November, 29, 1977). By etwapar, there is burial and thanksgiving service on Friday or Saturday or there is burial and thanksgiving on Sunday. The Church's argument for cutting down funeral expenses is from her standpoint of biblical faith. She argues that all property belongs to God who is its Creator.⁴⁴ He alone has absolute ownership over anything. Man's life, the earth, and all that man has or is able to create out of the raw materials with which he has been provided - all belong to God.⁴⁵ God has freely given man

⁴² By etwapar is meant cutting down funeral expenses and also shortening the long days for bereavement and travelling problems involved. Refer letter from Rev. S. B. Assamuah, "The Etwapar Funerary" dated 1st September, 1980, to the writer. The letter is in the writer's possession.

⁴³ The Rt. Rev. S. B. Assamuah was the chairman of the Winneba District of the Ghana Methodist Church and the President of the Winneba Council of Churches (from 1974-1979), in the Effutu Traditional Area. He became the President of the Ghana Methodist Conference in 1980-84. It was during his chairmanship at Winneba that Etwapar came into being in 1977.

⁴⁴ Refer Leaders Meeting, Minutes Book, Meeting held on 28th August, 1980 on 'Funeral Expenses: pp. 108-120, cf. also Charles L. Taylor Jr., "Old Testament Foundations" Christianity and Property, ed. Joseph F. Fletcher, Philadelphia - the Westminster Press, 1947, p. 12.

⁴⁵ Leaders Meeting. Ibid, see also Ps. 24/1, Job 41/11, cf. Ps. 50/12, Ex. 19/5.

the use of the land, air, water and even of other living creatures⁴⁶ as well as the use of money but the ultimate ownership of all belongs to the Creator alone. Man's relationship to them is one of stewardship i.e., of using them in accordance with the will of the one who is sovereign over all.⁴⁷ The Church, further, maintains that having gained all you can, by honest wisdom, and unwearied diligence, the second rule of Christian prudence is, 'Save all you can'.⁴⁸ Do not throw the precious talent into the sea. Do not throw it away in idle expenses, which is just the same as throwing it into the sea. Expend no part of the (money) merely to gratify the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, or the pride of Life.⁴⁹ As stewards of the Lord's goods, Christians ought not to gain money at the expense of life nor (which in effect the same thing) at the expense of their health. Christians are to gain all they can without hurting their mind any more than their body. For Christians they must preserve, at all events, the spirit of an healthful mind. The Church further contends that "Christians should do away with all that liquid fire, commonly called rums, or spiritous liquors".⁵⁰ This is because they tend to impair

⁴⁶ Leaders Meeting. Ibid. See also Gen. 1/26-29.

⁴⁷ Leaders Meeting. Ibid. See also Gardiner, op. cit. pp. 285-286.

⁴⁸ Leaders Meeting. Ibid.

⁴⁹ Leaders Meeting, op. cit. pp. 109-111. To this may be added J. S. Pobee, op. cit. pp. 26-29.

⁵⁰ Leaders Meeting op. cit. p. 110; The Constitution and Standing Orders of the Methodist Church Cap. 545, The Methodist Book Depot, Cape Coast, 1964, p. 105.

health. Although it is true that these may have a place in medicine yet there should rarely be occasion for them, were it not for the unskilfulness of the practitioner.⁵¹

Recently one F. G. Torto wrote an interesting article in a local weekly⁵² complaining of the increasing financial, physical, and emotional burdens that come with funerals in Ghana, Effutu people not excepted. Again, the New Drobo Traditional Council in October expressed concern over mounting funeral expenses. The Council suggested that donations are to be fixed at forty pesewas for a man and twenty pesewas for a woman.⁵³ Such expenditure has been crippling for many a family. This is very applicable to the Effutu people. So far as Christianity claims that it embraces the whole of life and in so far as considerable hardship is brought on the people as a result of such expenditure, the Church has no alternative but to get involved. Surely the Christian Church is committed to proclaiming peace and release to the poor and those in captivity of whatever form. Hence the introduction of Etwapar by the Methodist Church in Effutu Traditional Area.

The aim of cutting down funeral expenses has been achieved as a result of the introduction of Etwapar. "It is amazing how far this Etwapar has spread throughout the whole country irrespective of creeds, tribe and colour" maintains

⁵¹ Leaders Meeting, Ibid. p. 112.

⁵² F. G. Torto, 'The Problem of Funerals' in The Mirror, Friday, September 22, 1972, p. 7.

⁵³ Daily Graphic, Monday, October 23, 1972, p. 8. See also Pobe, op. cit. p. 28.

the Rt. Rev. S. B. Assamuah.⁵⁴

The Church requires a bereaved family who desire the completion of the funeral rites for the dead to desist from any practice of traditional rites contrary to the Church's stance. The Standing Order 548 Section 2 of the Methodist Conference of Ghana has the following line: "There shall be no drumming at a member's wake-keeping."⁵⁵ By this injunction, the Church's attitude to the Asafo company and other dancing groups like Adowa as well as beating of drums is clear. In other words the missionaries are asking the converts to look askance at traditional drumming, and dancing and not to engage in the pouring of libation during the community gathering for the burial and at the conclusion of the final funeral rites. The pouring of libation is seen in the eyes of the Church to be 'inevitably associated with ancestor worship' and that 'in its place there should be a prayer emphasis in teaching on the Communion of Saints, accompanied by Christian prayers of thanksgiving for the dead'.⁵⁶ Indeed libation is denounced as heathen.⁵⁷ Again, the singing of praises, recounting the deeds of the dead man and the attention drawn to the social status of the departed during the pouring of libation are regarded by the Church as 'blind devotion'. She claims that the emphasis

⁵⁴ This is from his letter to the writer on 1st September, 1980.

⁵⁵ See also The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Regulations, Preactice and Procedure, New ed. 1963, p. 39.

⁵⁶ Christian Council of the Gold Coast, op. cit. p. 66.

⁵⁷ Pobee, op. cit. p. 27.

should be more on praise and thanks to God than on credit for the man; and that 'Christians must not grieve after the manner of those who have no hope and must refrain from taking and offering intoxicating drink ...⁵⁸ during funeral celebration.

Another issue on which the Church has taken positive action concerns the treatment of the widow and the importance given to the burial of polygamists. As said earlier, traditionally widows are kept indoors for some weeks; in Effutu Traditional Area, they can only wear dress in the colour black or some such colour; they may even be asked to sleep on the floor or under the bed on which the deceased is laid in state.⁵⁹ Whatever the value of these practices, they only increase the stress and strain of the widow and that is unacceptable to the Christian who is committed to coming to the aid of all in distress.⁶⁰ Alongside the widowhood rite is the issue of Wills. According to the Methodist Standing Order 544 Section 1: "Each male member of the Church shall be urged, as a part of his Christian duty, to make a will providing adequately for his wife and children". Yet when a member dies intestate the ebusua members of the deceased act with no compassion whatsoever for the children and wife. The deceased's property is normally monopolised by the ebusua members, especially the next of kin. This contravenes the Standing Order 544 Section 2 which states:

⁵⁸ Methodist Standing Order 549. See also The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, op. cit. p. 39.

⁵⁹ Among the Ga people the widows are smeared with pepper.

⁶⁰ Pobe, op. cit. p. 28.

"The Church strongly recommends that where a male member dies intestate his self-acquired property shall be divided into three equal parts and one-third shall go to the wife, one-third to his children and one-third to his family". Yet when death comes no provision is made for the widow and the children. What should be the action of the Church? This will be discussed later in the thesis. With reference to the widowhood rites, the Church's stance is that the widowhood rites are paganish and Christians are urged not to give in to them. Furthermore the Church refuses to give polygamists the complete office of burial. For instance the Methodist Standing Order 568 states: "Ministers may conduct the funerals of 'Adherents' and other members of the Christian Church",⁶¹ and that with regard to polygamy the views of the Church are as follows:

(a) Plurality of marriage is not approved (b) Polygamists ... can be confirmed only when they have managed to adjust their marriage problems ... etc.⁶² People who commit suicide are also refused complete Church burial, on the grounds that they have shown themselves "unworthy" and that "every member of the Church should seek holiness of character and life after the

⁶¹ See The Constitution and Standing Orders of the Methodist Church, Ghana, op. cit. p. 502.

⁶² The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, op. cit. p. 41, see also Conference of Bishops of the Anglican Communion, Holden at Lambeth Palace, July 6 to August 5, 1908, Encyclical Letter from the Bishops with Resolutions and Reports, London, 1908, p. 112. Polygamists are regarded as adherents. According to the Methodist Standing Order 502 Cap. 5 it says: "Adherents, whether baptized or not, are those who are attached to a Society and seek the fellowship and nurture of the Church, but are unable for one reason or another to accept full discipline of membership ... the Leaders' Meeting shall recognize a special responsibility for their pastoral care ... but the Church welcomes them into fellowship, accepts responsibility for their spiritual nurture ..."

pattern of Christ and the teaching of the New Testament" and the Church has the "right to discipline members who in their judgement show themselves unworthy of their membership in the Church".⁶³

By Etwapar funerary injunctions and objections, the Church claims to be stressing her message of hope and belief in life after death and to have provision in her theology for handling the event of death. Whereas the New Testament itself is theologically silent as to the ways and the means of conducting funerals, the Church in its on-going practice to meet the existential needs of its constituencies has built a theology for the dead.⁶⁴ The books of the Common Prayer, Worship and Discipline and the Methodist Hymn book and offices contain all kinds of offices for the burial of the Dead. But before discussing the Christian burial the writer would like to describe a scene in a Christian home where death had occurred.⁶⁵

⁶³ See Methodist Constitution, op. cit. pp. 101-102.

⁶⁴ Contemporary revisions of the burial rite have brought many of the different traditions closer to each other, largely through a return to the more positive early theology with its emphasis on baptism and the resurrection, though prayers for the dead still remain a difficult area in which to reach theological agreement. (Refer Prayer and Departed. A report of the Archbishops Commission on Christian Doctrine, 1971). The Second Vatican Council set out clearly in its Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy the norms which were to be followed in the revision of the Roman rite of burial: The rite consists of four sections (five, if the body is brought to the church at some earlier time), namely the Funeral Mass, the Final Commendation and Farewell, The Procession to the Grave, and the service at the graveside. Refer Text in The New Funeral Mass Book, Redemptorist Publication, Chawton, 1971.

⁶⁵ This was the writer's field work in September, 1983, at Winneba, the capital of the Effutu Traditional Area. The description below is very common among the Effutu Christians.

After washing and dressing the body, a libation is poured by the ebusuapanyin. He calls on the ancestors of the deceased family about the journey which is going to be made by their deceased person.⁶⁶ There is an ostentatious display of grief. The old blinds of the house are replaced by white satin.

When the body has been laid in state friends and relatives pay their last respect to him. Then prayers are offered by the minister. The body is then put into the coffin. A funeral procession follows. The hearse itself is black, with glass sides, and atop the hearse lies the coffin, shining and well polished, with expensive looking metal handles and engraved plates. Sometimes the coffin is covered with rich Kente cloths or with black, purple or very dark green cloth. Sometimes the sides of the coffin are visible through the glass panels and the interior of the hearse is ablaze with flowers. Behind the hearse are the chief mourners - the men wearing full mourning cloth with headbands while the women are dressed in black, with black veils. The procession is accompanied by Ebibidwom⁶⁷ to the church which, in dignified calm, the mourners enter. At the gate of the church the coffin which is carried by relatives upon their shoulders, is led into the church by the minister in charge, wearing a

⁶⁶ The writer was not surprised about a libation being poured. According to the ebusuapanyin Mr. Kow Tekyi of the Twedan ebusua of Winneba, libation is very African and that there is nothing wrong with it. This Mr. Tekyi is a christian. Not until a libation is to be poured the minister who has come to offer some prayers is usually seated somewhere outside where the deceased has been laid in state.

⁶⁷ Ebibidwom are African music with their peculiarity African recitative-and-chorus-response. They are always in pentatonic scale. "They are the simple ecstatic utterances of wholly untutored minds". They are the Bible in song. They are ready made and come from the white heat of religious fervour during some protracted meeting in Church or Camp. Refer Assamuah's letter especially on "Akan Sacred Lyric Preface". See also S. G. Williamson, "Lyrics in the Pante Methodist Church", Africa, XVIII, 1958.

white stole, reading approved biblical text⁶⁸ (all standing as the coffin is carried in to rest on the bier or catafalque). After a hymn, a prayer is offered followed by a short sermon on 1 Cor. XV. 20-26, 35-38, 50-58.

At the grave side burial service at the cemetery of the Church, and in the case of the Methodist Church its ritual for the dead⁶⁹ are read by the officiating minister at the grave when the corpse is being interred. Then while the earth is cast upon the coffin during the committal the minister reads:

For as much as it hath pleased Almighty God ...
we therefore commit his body to the ground; earth
to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust⁷⁰ in sure and

⁶⁸ The Church of England, The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacrament and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church (According to the use of the Church of England, London, Oxford University Press, pp. 284-285; The Methodist Hymn Book and Offices, London, Methodist Conference Office, 1954, p.46; Ghana Presbyterian Asafo, Asore Yebea Ne Mpae Horow; AME Zion Church (Charlotte, North Carolina AME Zion Publishing House, 1978,) p. 285.

⁶⁹ The Methodist Hymn Book and Offices, op. cit. pp. 48-49. For the full programme of the Roman Catholic practice see Appendix D. 1.

⁷⁰ Rev. H. R. Haweis, Ashes to Ashes, London: Daldy, 1875, p. 245. The two principal meanings are that certain ashes have a sacred character and power and that dust and ashes signify mortality, mourning and penance. In O.T. one finds ashes (éper) and dust (ápar) used only as a sign of mortality and worthlessness or insignificance, sorrow and repentance (Gen. 18/27; Job 20/19). The most significant use of dust is with reference to the material out of which God formed man (Gen. 2/7). Here it affirms the Hebrew View of man as being a temporal creature in intimate unity with the rest of creation. Dust is also symbolic of man's frailty (Ps. 103/14). cf. (Gen. 18/27; Job 4/9 etc.) and hence it is used figuratively for the grave (Ps. 22/18, 29; 30/9; Dnl. 12/2). One finds such practices as springing ashes and dust on the head, covering the body, sitting or lying in dust and ashes, and eating dust and ashes. Christian liturgical usage and symbolism seem clearly to have been taken from Jewish tradition. E. J. Johnson "Ashes Liturgical use" of 'New Catholic Encyclopedia,' Vol. 1, London, Cath. Univ. Press, 1967, p. 948; D. K. Edwards, 'Dust' The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Vol. 1, Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1979, p. 998. Missionaries have reported a superstitious devotion to the rite of throwing dust or earth on the coffin among the natives and mulattos. They allegedly believed that that rite brings rest to the dead man and prevents him from becoming a haunting ghost. See W. H. Mueller, Die africanische Landschaft Fetu, Hamburg, (1975), p. 254.

certain hope of the resurrection to the eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation⁷¹

After this wreaths are laid by well-wishers on the grave. The relatives, friends and the Church members go to the house of the dead. Thanks are given to all who participated in the funeral. The Ebusua are left alone to take account of their expenses which are shared among themselves.

The attitude of the Protestant Churches in making provision in their rituals for the burial of the dead is good, for it shows the Churches' stance on death and the life after death.⁷² It also shows that the Churches' stance is that death is not the cessation of man, and that life continues after death, under God. This is consistent with the beliefs outlined in the previous chapter. Notwithstanding the tragic contradictions confronting life, one can go on living ones life. Death may strike, dash every hope one has in life into pieces, yet

⁷¹ Methodist Hymn Book and Offices op. cit. pp. 48-49, see also The Book of Common Prayer op. cit. p. 289, Discipline, op. cit. p. 289.

⁷² Christian burial rites have varied from extended services intended to sanctify the whole range of action from the moment of death to the completion of the act of burial, to rites, if they can be described as such, in which the only significant action has been the burial itself without prayers. The concerns most evident in the prayers have ranged from a commendation of the departed to God, through prayers for mercy and deliverance from the torments of hell or the terrors of the Day of Judgement, to admonitions to the living to lead virtuous lives in the face of death which strikes at the root of human pride. In the course of time the rites have been influenced by Jewish custom, by pagan practice (both by assimilation and rejection), and by the special conditions prevailing in monastic houses. They have been shaped at various times by different theologies, one emphasizing the perfecting of baptism and participation in the paschal mystery of the Lord's own death and resurrection, another stressing the need for deliverance from punishment and the necessary purification of the sinner. See Appendix D 2 for the practice of the Independent Churches, as for instance Musama Disco Christo Church.

death is not the last word of God. Ultimately, the Christian hope assures one that all aspects of human existence are under God's sovereign will. God's sovereign will is not a mechanical determinism. It is this God's will which elects unconditionally life and salvation for all. From the previous discussions in the various rituals for the burial of the dead, with exception of the Roman Catholic Church and Anglican Church of Ghana (the Church of England) rituals which call for Requiem Mass for the dead and Saints beyond the burial offices, the service at the grave following directly after the one at the Church or funeral home and the thanks given to the people at the bereaved house, marks the end of the Christian funeral rites.

In Ghana and particularly in the Effutu Traditional Area however, the Methodist Church for instance in her attempts to accommodate traditional Effutu practices for the dead has made allowances, as indicated earlier, for Etwapar thanksgiving service after the burial ceremonies for the deceased. This attitude reflects the Church's recognition of traditional funeral rites.

In principle, the day or date for the etwapar thanksgiving service is determined by the bereaved ebusua in consultation with minister in charge of the society, parish or circuit.⁷³ So far as the writer is concerned, it is a step in the right direction because it is an attempt to relate the Christian practice to tradition. One suspects it is a Christian variant

⁷³ It is sad to recall that many a time the ebusua of the deceased have rushed to pay the Church dues of the deceased in order to get a Church burial. It is immoral for the Church to countenance because "whatever is not of conviction is sin" (Rom. 14:23).

on the fortieth day commemoration in the traditional society.

Before the burial and the subsequent thanksgiving service there is another feature of the Christian celebration of death among the Effutu. In addition to posted notices on the walls indicating the date of the burial and the final obsequies, mourning cards are printed on white and frequently embossed with traditional symbols of grief, the inverted torch, the weeping willow and kneeling female mourners. These cards⁷⁴ are in turn mounted on highly ornamental embossed fretted or beautified 'memorial-card mounts', usually black and silver with patterns of inverted torches palms, broken columns, ivy and much 'Gothic' ornament. Often the cards are hand-coloured, sometimes incorporating tinted photographs or silhouettes of the deceased.

Naturally, mourning-cards need black-edged mourning envelopes. The cards are intended as reminders of the dead so that the recipient would be sure to attend the funeral. The card itself is modest, containing usually the name and the age of the dead person. Possibly some text or verse might be added, as well as the date and place of burial and the church in which the thanksgiving service would be held.

The wording is often of the doggerel type:

A sudden death, a mind contented
Living beloved, dead lamented.

Or

Adieu! my sweet one, sleep in peace upon
thy pillow lone and chill; Thy little life
was doomed to cease. But ah! I fondly love
thee still.

and

Oh, fond and loving spirit thou, Far,

⁷⁴ Mourning cards are not normally printed. But in the case of one J. C. O. who died on 6th November, 1984 this was done. The writer is quoting this to show how Christian funeral could sometimes be very expensive.

Far away from one art now.⁷⁵

The etwapar thanksgiving service is incorporated in the course of the regular Sunday morning worship. A hymn is sung after which a prayer is offered. A short sermon is given, the contents of which show God's power over death and a joyous thanksgiving for the redeeming work of Christ, especially through his death and Resurrection and for the hope of everlasting life. A thanksgiving for God's departed servant and for his life, for the bereaved ebusua and for the congregation's memories of him; and for his release from the tribulations of this world. This short sermon of hope and assurance of the Resurrection of the Body is normally based again on 1 Cor. XV 20-25, 35-38, 50-58. After the sermon, a hymn is again sung and panegyric given by the minister honouring the memory of the deceased. So far as traditional Christianity goes, this is all of Christian funerals. It is not built to be expensive. Yet a feast is held after the thanksgiving service. In these times in Ghana feasts have become a status symbols and families vie with their neighbours in their display of funeral magnificance and in the provision supply of high quality victuals and liquor. Nowadays, there is the practice among the Effutu Christians in attending three thanksgiving service including that of the etwapar, during three consecutive Sundays. On the first etwapar Sunday as said earlier, there is a great feast. On the second Sunday there is what the

⁷⁵ These were words printed during John Christopher Otoo's funeral in November 6, 1984. The late Otoo was a businessman and the proprietor of the Avenida Hotel. He became the head of the Anona Okusubentsir stool of Winneba. He had a powerful personality which revitalised the activities of his ebusua members and brought them together. He was appointed as a Patron of the Calvary Methodist Women's Fellowship in 1982. The magnificent pulpit, made of marble, in the Winneba Methodist Church was built by him. He was a rich man.

people call a 'moderate feast'. On the last and the third Sunday which climaxes everything there is what the people call edzidzinom kese, the greatest feast. The end of the greatest feast is also the end of the celebration.

In Christian funeral ceremonies, and especially the burial rites, everything is seen from an eschatological perspective. (i.e. hope in the future life.)

Despite the efforts of the Church to take account of traditional funeral practices these have by no means met with universal approval. Indeed, many African Christians express serious reservations towards regulations and activities relating to Christian burial.

Church's Objections, Criticism of:

The Effutu convert enters the Church as a traditional Effutu attracted to an institution whose demands and concepts are basically foreign to him. However great the attraction and however sincere his attachment to the Church, he cannot deny himself or the society within which he has been nurtured. He carries within himself his traditional outlook and attitudes, the religious and social valuations of his people. What he hears he interprets in his own way. He seeks to fit the Church's demands and teaching into his own social and religious moulds. It is not therefore surprising that wherever one turns in the Church the religious and social valuations of the people manifest themselves. However, it should be pointed out that among the Effutu Christians, there are two factions - that is, there are fanatics and there are traditionalists.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ These two factions are clearly seen, for instance in the Winneba Methodist Church during their society meetings. These are meetings of all members of the Society which are called from time to time for general fellowship amongst the members, for testimony concerning religious experience and for pastoral guidance and common counsel in the things of the Kingdom of God. Refer Standing Order 529 cap. 1.

The first point of controversy concerns the Church's "Etwapar Thanksgiving Service" and the aftermath. This is a live issue for the ministry of the Church which made the accommodation in an attempt to be relevant to the indigenous culture. The Ghanaian Press are equally concerned about this issue. This concern is attested by the attitudes of certain section of the Ghanaian society which have been advocating, with the support of some Church leaders, the abolition of the "Etwapar Thanksgiving Services", because of the so-called attendant immoral practice, such as, some men flirting with some women; the women fighting about the men; people getting drunk; husbands getting home late as well as the escalating prohibitive costs of funerals.⁷⁷ These additions to the thanksgiving service are hard to believe but they are true. Let it be pointed out here however, that any mention of the abolition of the thanksgiving service in Churches is viewed by the parishioners who are rooted in African tradition and by traditional specialists, as undermining the funeral rites and ceremonies for which the Church made the accommodation.

The parishioners and the traditionalists further maintain that it would mean in essence, advocating the partial abolition of funerals.⁷⁸ The African membership of the Church would thus be deprived of the opportunity to complete the full funeral celebrations for the deceased, in accordance with their parti-

⁷⁷ Refer for instance, Winneba Methodist Society Meeting, Minutes Book, meeting held on 24th August, 1983, on "Funerals".

⁷⁸ This was obtained from the interviews the writer conducted during his field work in September, 1983 at Winneba.

cular culture. The Etwapar thanksgiving service initiated by the Church as an attempt to christianize the final funeral rites for African Christians has, for the majority of the faithful, taken the place of the traditional final public funeral celebrations. The writer thinks that any attempt at the abolition of the Etwapar Thanksgiving Service without a critical evaluation of the deeper issue at stake, and the resultant repurcussion on Protestant ministry and the possibility of suggesting a meaningful alternative for the service would fail to meet the needs of African Christian in their hour of grief and bereavement. One or two things should be taken seriously in any attempt to abolish the Etwapar Thanksgiving Service.

In the light of the concern expressed by parishioners rooted in African tradition, it is not enough to just argue that because of the immoral practices attendant upon the Etwapar Thanksgiving Service its abolition would be in keeping with the spirit of biblical theology and with what the abolitionists also call the spirit of the Ghanaian revolution.⁷⁹ There should be the benefit of a critical reflection on what constitutes biblical theology and an evaluation of the content of the Ghanaian revolution relative to traditional funeral practices, since the authors of the so-called revolution are divided as to what constitutes the spirit of the revolution. It could be suggested that the advocates for the abolition of the service should be responsibly prepared to take the risk of at least suggesting the immediate indiscriminate return to traditional funeral practices

⁷⁹ In order to do away with extravagant spending, nepotism and to keep a smooth economy of the country, the military government came out with what is called the spirit of revolution.

without the benefit of a Church service for all its African members, while at the same time not initiating disciplinary action against them.

Informants further maintain (1) that in correcting these common faults of backwardness and indisposition found in the 'Etwapar Thanksgiving Service' there should be growth which is expected in the Christian. They maintain that this lack of growth might be as a result of lack of leadership. In fact they contend that if Christians are not growing then they are dying. They say that the being born again is not everything; the growing after birth to maturity is much more, is the end for which birth is alone valuable. They maintain that there are two tests of maturity. The one is that the mature are teachers of others. "Considering the time which has elapsed" they say, "since you became Christians, you should now be teachers of others." They argue that the grown man does not need his father to earn his food, and his mother to take him on her knee to feed him; he earns food for himself and for others. So the mature Christian is independent of his former teachers, and can himself instruct the ignorant. (2) that the second fact regarding the kind of life expected of the people and which they wish the Church to let her people observe is that this growth, which is essential, depends on the truth people receive. They compare Christian truth to food. They say that Christian teaching could do for the inner man what food could do for the body. They maintain that the body cannot grow without food; neither can the spirit come to maturity save by the reception of spiritual truth.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ The writer owes this information to J. W. Quainoo, aged 95, Opanyin Foomson aged 85 and Madam Mills-Robertson, all leaders in the Methodist Church, Winneba, Recorded in 1983, during field work in September, 1983.

What these parishioners are saying is that it is not by abolishing the thanksgiving service that matters but that the Church should lead her people to grasp Christian growth. By so doing the so called immoral acts would cease. Thanksgiving Service would be as it is being expected of the Thanksgiving Service purporting to give thanks to God for the life of the deceased on earth and all that life meant to them. They say that 'Thanksgiving Service' should be left alone. So far as the writer is concerned, it is a step in the right direction because it is an attempt to relate the Christian practice to tradition. As said earlier, one suspects it is a Christian variant on the fortieth day commemoration in the traditional society.

However, one is not convinced that the Churches have made enough effort to accommodate their ideas to the culture of Ghanaian/Effutu Society.

One clergyman who has been vociferous in advocating the abolition of the Thanksgiving Service in the whole of Ghana Methodism is the Reverend Joe K. Clegg.⁸¹ In an article published by the Daily Graphic of December 12, 1972, captioned 'Church Bans Memorial Service', Mr. Clegg maintained that the abolition of the Service had become necessary due to the heavy debts incurred by families and relatives with attendant immoral acts.⁸² The Superintendent minister in a reply to a question, said that the abolition had taken place in his District because of so many things people had added to the services. He pointed out that

⁸¹ Rev. Joe K. Clegg was the Superintendent as well as the Chairman of the Accra District of the Methodist Church, Ghana.

⁸² 'Church Bans Memorial Service' The Daily Graphic, (Accra, Graphic Press, December 12, 1972, No. 6900).

some people even 'don't go to the Service but go straight to the house'⁸³ of the bereaved and spend the whole day - eating and drinking, and even soaking girl friends with drinks at drinking bars'. He said it was a disgrace to use the name of the Lord in vain adding: "I don't think God will be happy with us".⁸⁴

Other abolitionists maintain that the Thanksgiving Service which was meant to be a service of praise and gratitude to God, has rather brought about 'the lack of Christian responsibility'. They maintain that, viewed thus, from the stand point of man's relationship to God whom he confronts as Creator, man's response should have been of praise and gratitude. Viewed from the stand-point of man's relation to his fellows and to the rest of the created order, his response should have been of love and reverence. They argue⁸⁵ that this double relationship should be inescapable for man since he is a free, self-transcendent being placed in relationship with his fellow creatures and with his Creator. These abolitionists maintain that this unifying relationship amid all of those relations of the self to others is its relationship to God who is the Creator of all and in whose will the harmony of the good of all is finally found. They maintain that as an expression of man's praise and gratitude to God man is summoned to show respect and reverence to all of God's creation but not in adulterous living. They further argue that Christianity teaches that in relation to all created things - not just animate things - man is called upon

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ This was obtained in September, 1983 during the course of the writer's field work. I am grateful to the following Church members from the Methodist, Anglican and Presbyterian Churches in Effutu Area. Opanyin Gyanpanyin of Nsuekyir Methodist Church, Madam Ekua Panyin of Winneba Methodist Women's Fellowship, Opanyin Appiah of Gyahadze Methodist Church, Madam Effua Bertsiwa of Anglican Church, Winneba and Mr. Robert Ghunney of Presbyterian Church, Winneba.

to show respect and reverence for each in its order of being and in accordance with the purpose of God. They say that in relationship to the created order man's grateful response to God demands that he seeks to fulfill the divine will - 'Thou shall not commit adultery', etc. hence man is not free to start with himself and use anything whatsoever with regard only to the desires of the self as these immoral acts show. During the fourteenth annual Conference of the Ghana Methodist Church held in Kumasi in August 14, 1973, a ruling on the ban of memorial/Thanksgiving service in Accra District was set aside with the order that until a committee to be appointed by the Conference to look into the controversial issue came out with its findings and reported on the subject, memorial/Thanksgiving services should be held in all of the connexional local societies of the Methodist Conference of Ghana. This was followed by other Protestant Churches. Since 1973 no concrete decision has been taken except what has developed in Effutu Traditional Area known as Etwapar Thanksgiving Service.

Joe Clegg and other abolitionists are not the only people advocating the abolition of Thanksgiving Service. They are supported by the Ghanaian media - 'The Graphic', 'The Times' and 'The Ashanti Pioneer'. All point out the following issues: Adulteration of Christian practices; bereaved families becoming poorer as the result of the Thanksgiving Service; departure from the original Christian precepts; the rich using the occasion to parade wealth; families becoming envious of the dead; and that rich funeral celebration run counter to the demands of Ghanaian revolution and that by the people's behaviour, there is an abuse of the dignity and worth God has bestowed upon man as the image

of God. This image of God includes, man's rational capacity for self-transcendence, for self-knowledge and for introspection. This dignity and worth is far greater than that of other living things.

According to the writer, what the Methodist Church, Accra District, and the media were saying was not so much concerned with the adulteration of Christian practices and departure from the original Christian precepts per se. Rather it was recognising the serious problem of the Church's inadequate fore-sight and vision in relating Christian practices and for that matter, the Christian faith to the culture and traditions of the African Christian.

The second matter on which traditionalists and parishioners take a firm stand concerns wreaths laid at the grave. Unlike the traditionalists, the advocates for the abolition of the Thanksgiving Service also maintain that 'Funeral Flowers are wasteful'. During Christian burials multiple beaded wire wreaths and plastic flowers abound; and in recent years fresh flowers sealed in transparent plastic, like salad in aspic jelly. Even the smallest of these costs the equivalent of ₵200 to ₵400 in the lavish "pompes funebres" shops which are significantly so numerous and prominent in towns in Effutu Traditional Area. This is the living speaking to the living of the quantification of mourning. The wreaths or flowers laid during the Christian burial come from relatives, friends and workmates of the dead. The argument for and against wreaths tallies with what was recorded in the United Methodist Reporter of February 17, 1978.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ The United Methodist Reporter, 'Flowers at Funeral are not wasteful' Dallas, Texas, February 17, 1978.

This carried in its popular column "My Witness" letters to the editor from concerned readers on the question raised in the publication of one William Matheny's article "Funeral Flowers are Wasteful". Of all the leaders present at the Leaders' Meeting of the Winneba Methodist Church, for instance half supported the abolition of wreaths while the other half reacted negatively to this stance. The concerns expressed in the argument by those opposing the abolition of wreaths are worth noting. They maintain (1) that giving flowers is a sign of the divine blessing; (2) that the flower with a perfume that charms, is a beautiful symbol of love and friendship and honour which is never wasteful; (3) that it is true that flowers fade, which is all the more reason to send them at times of death, for what better means do people have of attesting to the transitory period of man? (4) that flowers create a background of warmth and beauty which adds to the dignity of the funeral service; and (5) that in the minds of the bereaved flowers do not wither and they do not die. They are recalled time and time again as indelible expressions of sympathy.⁸⁷ In conclusion the parishioners argue that after all people spend on what they want and expedient.

Indeed the high and rising cost of funerals affected everywhere by inflation has become prohibitive among the people in Ghana. Christians, as a people, must find other ways and methods of handling the issue, other than making the Thanksgiving Service of **the Church** a scape-goat for their predicament. It is interesting to note that the expenditure involved in the Thanks-

⁸⁷ Refer Winneba Methodist Leaders' Meeting, Minutes Book, Meeting held on 30th September, 1983, on 'Funerals'.

giving Services continues to be incurred regardless of the Church's injunction.⁸⁸ The style of funeral is now being considered as a help to establish social position, for funerals even more than weddings, serve as vehicles for displaying publicity. The vast numbers of relatives and friends, and the expensive Thanksgiving - mourning - dresses, and expensive wreaths, fix the status of a 'family' in the eyes of the onlookers. This also assures the public of the regard in which the deceased is held by the relatives, for a cheap funeral with no trimmings would make it clear to the world that the dead went to 'Cnyankopon Fie' (the palace of God) unloved and unhonoured.

These trimmings, as the abolitionists maintain, make the middle and working classes who cannot afford such an expensive funeral to be looked down upon. They maintain that the Churches must intensify and widen the scope of their teachings on Christian stewardship to include a responsible stewardship in handling funeral celebrations, that is, they should show the people that what they are spending money on is inconsistent with what they claim to believe.⁸⁹

The traditionlists on the other hand maintain that the Churches should realize and come to grips with parishioners' contention that they spend money on what they want and that this is a psychological conviction that has grown up within a culture. It is interesting to note that those interviewed were middle class people with strong feeling of happiness in spending on their deceased relatives. They argue that this is not unique in the

⁸⁸ See The Constitution and Standing Orders op. cit. p. 551
Section 4; Regulations, Practice and Procedure, paras. 153-6 etc.

⁸⁹ Refer Leaders' Meeting Minutes Book, ibid.

Effutu Traditional Area, it is a human phenomenon, and that by their ebusua system whatever debt is incurred is shared among themselves, and that the concern of one is the concern of all.

The writer thinks that the traditionalists are right in saying that people spend money on what they want, especially during funerals. Indeed it is also true that each person is entitled to his or her own opinion on decision making. But on this central point of stewardship⁹⁰ they are wrong. What they say, therefore, should be taken as weak arguments. The Christian Church has the responsibility to help people understand the intrinsic relationship between Christian faith and their daily responsibility. This responsibility involves stewardship and the word stewardship inevitably brings to mind the three Ts - time, talent, and treasure. The Church therefore, speaks to people of money and in doing this it does not have to apologize. Once and for all Jesus established the precedent for Christians - the one subject in the New Testament to which he most often referred is money.⁹¹ With great feeling and openness he constantly addressed the issue, knowing that it contained the potential for the greatest good and the greatest evil.

It is true that in the Effutu Traditional Area and as it is perhaps elsewhere, money today, is the prime expression of the people's value system; so much so that for the affluent segment it has become the modern day "Sacrament". By it human relation-

⁹⁰ See Supra, pp. 137 ff.

⁹¹ See Mk. 6/7, 8. Luke 16/13, cf. Luke 16/9.

ships, institutions, and associations are judged and categorized. It is the dynamic factor that operates in their society. In the face of this, there are strong signs throughout the Effutu Churches in particular and Ghanaian Churches in general that constructive and creative efforts are being made to bring, the Gospel to bear on this issue and break open for people the good news that is found in the Christian doctrine of Stewardship. If people believe that what they possess comes from them and belongs to them, then they will manage those possessions according to their own human values and not according to God's. The people's own innate selfishness will dictate their use.

If, on the other hand, both the traditionalists and parishioners acknowledge that all of their possessions come from God, what then? Where can they start in making God's value system their own? By seriously and prayerfully considering the good use of money as the standard or norm - not as a law, but as a norm.⁹²

Underlying this is the basic biblical and theological rationale for Christian spending and giving - namely, Christians believe that Jesus died for them just as they are, and that this dying took away the finality of death and gave them the assurance of eternal life. One way of expressing one's deep gratitude and thankfulness to Jesus for what He has done for him is how to use and share with Christ's Church and other people at least all that Jesus has placed in his possession.

In conclusion the Church should maintain the Etwapar Thanksgiving Service. This is because, as said earlier, the aim of the service is to give thanks, praise and gratitude to

⁹² Refer Methodist Standing Order No. 551.

God for the departed servant. This service is a service of hope in the future - the kingdom of God. At the same time, the Church should widen her evangelism on Christian ethics as responsible love to God. That is, the Church should teach about the correct use of money in accordance with the Gospel. People should not spend money lavishly but as stewards should spend it profitably and in humility. This would hopefully help to cut down the costs.

In addition to serious issues arising out of the cost of funerals, there are other causes of concern relating to death and the dead. These are the polygamy issue and the practice of drumming and pouring of libation.

The Church has assumed that polygamy is wrong. This whole argument hinges decisively upon the following assumptions: that Genesis evidently depicts monogamy as divinely willed from the beginning. Polygamy is intrinsically bound up with divorce and remarriage - hence, also, with adultery.⁹³ The polygamists are therefore classified as adherents in for instance, the Methodist Church, Ghana. It is therefore the injunction of the Church that "ministers may conduct the funerals of adherents".⁹⁴ Polygamists are not given the complete office of burial. Normally as already indicated there are two services held for a deceased Christian

⁹³ For the opinion that polygamy amounts to adultery, see Williard Bruce, "Polygamy and the Church", Concordia Theological Monthly XXXIX, 1963 (227-228); E. G. Farrinder, The Bible and Polygamy, (London: SPCK, 1950), p. 48; and Pope Innocent III, excerpt from his letter, "Gaudemus in Domino" to the Bishop of Tiberias in the beginning of 1201, in Heinrich Denzinger, ed, The Sources of Catholic Faith, trans, Roy J. Deferrari from Denzinger's Enchiridion Symbolorum, edition 30 St. Louis: B. Herder, 1957, No. 408, pp. 159-160. See also the response to this opinion by Holst, "Polygamy and the Bible", pp. 207-210; "There is no indication in Scripture that polygamy can be equaled with adultery".

⁹⁴ Refer eg. Methodist Standing Order 568.

in good standing - one in the Church with the casket and the other service at the cemetery.⁹⁵ Polygamists who are considered by the Church as adherents are refused the complete office of burial. Ministers of the parishes in the accordance with the law of the Church may perform the office of the burial of the polygamists only at the cemetery. In effect by indication the casket of the polygamist is considered to pollute and desecrate the hallowed walls of the Church's edifice if allowed in.

The critics of the Church's stance argue that there is a growing body of exegetical and theological work which question the traditional biblical interpretation and that, for instance, the biblical texts that are usually cited to show the incompatibility of polygamy with Christianity are concerned specifically with other matters.⁹⁶ Also, the whole biblical case against the practice of polygamy is developed only in inference and it hinges on a number of assumptions which can no longer be taken as self-evident. It could be further said that one can undoubtedly say that it is only when one begins to take seriously the different cultural conceptions and social institutions like those of the

⁹⁵ See *Supra*, pp. 164ff

⁹⁶ See Eugene Hillman, *Polygamy Reconsidered*, N.Y. Orbis Books, 1975, p. 139. cf. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, 111-4, ed. G. W. Bromiley, Trans. G. T. Thomson and H. Knight. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1961, p. 199, George Crespy, *The Grace of Marriage in Marriage and Christian Tradition*, ed. by George Crespy, Paul Evdokimov Christian Duguoc, trans. Agnes Cunningham, Techney, 111, Divine World Publication, 1968, p. 19. It has been pointed out that there is not a word in the Bible against polygamy, Add John L. McKenzie, *Dictionary of the Bible*, (Milwaukee, Bruce, 1965), pp. 505-506; Edward Schillebeeckx, *Marriage: Secular Reality and Saving Mystery*, 2, vol; trans. M. D. Smith, (London, Sheed and Ward, 1965) 1, p. 284. "The great evil ... was not polygamy as such, but so called successive polygamy - a husband was able to annul his marriage, send his wife away, and enter into a new marriage".

Effutu people that some of the Western traditional and hitherto unquestioned biblical interpretations are apt to be queried, and call for critical re-examination. So it is that the Christian encounter with the culture of African such as that of the Effutu people compels one now to take a closer and more critical look at the biblical interpretations that have led the Christian Churches in Ghana to impose the law of monogamy, as though this were an absolutely universal law revealed by God.

The bereaved families in the Effutu Traditional Area view the attitude of the Church towards polygamists as unsympathetic, unchristian and insensitive to traditional Effutu culture. They also believe that by giving adherent⁹⁷ status to polygamists the Church has stretched out her arms of Christian fellowship for them and thus the Church being the 'body of Christ' is constantly built up renewed and strengthened by Christ's presence and action, through Word and sacrament in the Holy Spirit, not by men. The Church, therefore, is the recipient of grace, a community and royal priesthood of the people of God including the polygamists responding to this gift incorporate praise and thanksgiving to God; and responding and manifesting God's sovereign rule and Saving grace. The bereaved families again maintain that because the Church is sent into the world to continue Christ's service and to witness to His presence among all mankind in liberating

⁹⁷ It is strange that the polygamists do not fight for full membership. Of course since 1973, the Methodist Conference set up a Committee to go into the matter. But no sympathetic result has come out. Addressing the Representative session of the Conference of the Methodist Church, Ghana, President Stephens 'On Church and culture urged members to find answers to such questions as "the Christian attitude to ... custom, to libation, puberty ... to polygamy and the polygamous convert ... to a veneration of the ancestors." Refer Methodist Times, Vol. 1 No. 1 Quarterly, September, 1985.

men from fear and against injustice and discrimination, the nature and the mission of the Church therefore, belong inseparably together, for mission and service presuppose an authentic fellowship of the reconciled. A fellowship without mission is disobedient to the commandment of its Lord. The fellowship of the Church calls for a deep mutual sharing of the spiritual and material gifts of God; a fellowship of those who are at once sinful in themselves but made righteous in Christ; and that the Church being 'a pilgrim people' is only exposed to God's judgement and nourished on its way by His grace which exceeds both man's achievement and desires and deserts. The concerned bereaved family maintain that if the Church is one, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic as well as the 'People of God' under God's grace, then to deny full Christian burial rites to any Christian, in this instance the polygamists, is not commensurate with the Christian Gospel.⁹⁸ The concerned bereaved families insist that since the laws of the land (Ghana) which govern civil marriage and divorce recognize polygamy as a legitimate institution and that in the traditional customary practice of the African Polygamy is not at all regarded as sin or an immoral institution, the Church's stance regarding funerals should be re-considered, unless the Church is to become a refrigerator for the preservation of a chosen few souls. The bereaved families are right to argue in the way that they are doing.

⁹⁸ One late Hewton built a church building at Aborko, which was some few miles from Winneba. After Mr. Hewton's death his body was not allowed into the church with an excuse that he was a polygamist. Some of the town folks assaulted the Methodist Catechist in charge of the Aborko Church. The Church building was also pulled down. This occurred in 1977, February 30th.

Furthermore, the writer's concern is with the reference to Adherent.⁹⁹ Adherents are those baptized members of the Church who technically cannot be full members because of some disability like a polygamous marriage. Such a person even if he has been a regular and active member of the Church will never have the Church service but will be taken straight to the graveside where the clergyman may officiate. The writer thinks that this is not right. Surely the adherent's active participation in Church affairs is more important than disability because it is evidence of what the Church means to him. And who is not without disability? "He who is without sin, let him be the first to cast a stone." "Why should we draw a scale of sin?"¹⁰⁰ They are all sin in the sight of God. Many a time the Church punishes the adherents for being sincere and honest: in Ghana society extra-marital associations are not uncommon at all levels, clergy, civil servants, labourers, teachers, to mention only a few. As long as man has not formalised it, we pretend he is not doing it. For these considerations one is convinced that the attitude of the Methodist Church in particular and the Protestant Churches in general to adherents is legalistic and sometimes unfair and, therefore, immoral and therefore, unchristian.

But on the other side of the coin, are we totally right to blame the Church for her actions? One could argue that the Church's stance should be considered to be right. This is because

⁹⁹ Refer Methodist Standing Order 502 Cap. 5.

¹⁰⁰ Pobe, op. cit. p. 26.

before his admission into the church the polygamist knows that by the rules of the church, his dead body would not be taken into the Church. What the writer therefore suggests is that the people who go against the Church's stance, should first fight, for instance, against the Church's Standing Order No. 568 of the Methodist Constitution. The other problem concerns those who die in the act of committing any grievous crime. The Methodist Standing Order 541 Cap. 2 states: "Ministers and Leaders' Meeting ... shall have the right to discipline members who in their judgement show themselves unworthy of their membership in the Church." By this those who commit suicide are to be considered 'unworthy' as such are not given full Christian burial.¹⁰¹ They are in a way treated as adherents. But today no one can seriously maintain that committing suicide is any worse than squandering state funds, or manipulating society through untruths. In any case modern psychological studies are convincing that suicide at the point of the suicide is not a normal person; he is mentally sick. So why should a mentally sick person be punished when he is not in the control of his life? The writer thinks that the Church should reconsider the issue of not giving Christian burial to suicides.

Another issue of crisis is the practice of drumming. The Church's stance is that "there shall be no drumming at a member's wake-keeping."¹⁰² Drums and traditional dancing are therefore

¹⁰¹ In 1980 one Mr. K. who was a staunch Christian and a Society Steward of the Winneba Methodist Church was refused a full Christian burial. This was because he committed suicide. The action of the Church was viewed by many parishioners as unsympathetic. The membership of the Church started to dwindle. The people complained that the Church should have gone into the matter to know why the man committed suicide.

¹⁰² See for instance, The Methodist Constitution and Standing Orders, 548, Section 2.

forbidden on Church premises.¹⁰³ The earliest missionaries assumed that drumming had heathen associations and, therefore, was unreligious if not sinful. In the Church's eyes therefore, the drums are considered to be divinized. Drumming and dancing are therefore taken to be heathenish and paganish whatever these words mean. They are therefore repugnant to Christian beliefs - that "You shall not make yourself a graven image".¹⁰⁴ This is a call of obedience to God and His sovereignty.

The writer thinks that these argumentations and observations should be evaluated within the context of the intentionality of traditional drumming and dancing. In drumming a large number of songs are sung by the chorus, songs about people, dead or alive, songs so constructed as to enable the band, as for instance, the Adowa band which is only played during traditional funeral celebrations, to mention particular people for whom sympathy has to be expressed as well as songs reflecting on social events and mortality in general. Drumming at funerals therefore conveys a message to all present that 'death, the inevitable end will come when it will come' to all. It also portrays the traditional orchestral accompaniment of the dirges and song lament,¹⁰⁵ contributing to the enhancement and ⁹piquancy and elegance of the funeral celebrations. Expressions of deep felt sentiments and

¹⁰³ See also Smith, op. cit. p. 273.

¹⁰⁴ According to some Church leaders interviewed, sacrifices of blood are made on or to the drums thus making them more than ordinary instruments of entertainment.

¹⁰⁵ See J. H. Nketia, Drumming In Akan Communities in Ghana, (London; Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., 1953) and Funeral Dirges of the Akan People, New York, Negro Universities Press, 1963, p. 119.

grief are also seen in drumming. According to the chief drummer Annobil,¹⁰⁶ drumming is not only a rite without which the funeral loses its meaning in traditional Effutu cultural lives. In drumming one hears the Effutu religious melody which has a popular origin and is thus closely connected with the religious life of the Effutu Traditional Area, though it has its secular use also.

The critics of the Church's stance maintain that drumming, especially at funerals, is a normal medium expressing adoration or worship. In the first place, the dancers show a physical bowing down, implying the worship of the true God, Onyankopon. They maintain that in order that Onyankopon's high position should be acknowledged, praises are carried out both outwardly and inwardly by the dancer bowing down in adoration and homage.

The writer suggests that in view of these arguments for the importance of drumming and the atmosphere it creates for the expression of funeral dirges, it has become a matter of urgency for the Church to have a new look at the drumming issue, in an attempt to meaningfully evaluate and assess it in conjunction with other traditional expressions connected with funeral celebrations. To discover what these expressions meant to the Effutu (or an African) then, and what they mean to him now, would be the greatest service the Church could provide on the issues of traditional funeral practices and ministry. No serious student of the subject, therefore, could maintain that the drums and the drumming

¹⁰⁶ I am grateful to chief drummer Kobina Annobil of Winneba, chief drummer Opanyin Pantu of Nsuekyir, chief drummer Opanyin Gyansa of Gyahadze and chief drummer Kweku Eku of Sankor for their openness and explanations about the importance of drumming during ceremonies such as funeral celebrations.

per se are evil. So here is a case of a Church holding desperately on to colonial inheritance.¹⁰⁷

Another issue on which the Christian Church has taken a firm stand is that raised by the pouring of libation. This indeed has rendered the Church ineffective. As pointed out earlier, pouring of libation is one of the main rites of funeral celebration: funeral rites begin with it and end with it. Pouring of libation is considered "to be a contact rite".¹⁰⁸ It is a symbolic action to show the unbroken fellowship between the living and the dead. John Mbiti maintains that "libation and giving of food to the departed are tokens of fellowship, hospitality and respect; the drink and food so given are symbols of family continuity and contact".¹⁰⁹ Libation is also used as a rite of blessing at the start of a venture, or of a sojourn at a distance, or as a rite of thanksgiving on safe return from a journey. There is occasional use of it at ceremonies remote from traditional life itself¹¹⁰ but it is quite commonly used at funerals.

For some time now Christian leaders have denounced libation as heathen and have discouraged Christians from practicing it.¹¹¹ The Church says that it is against the Christian standard of rectitude and civility to pour libation. This negative attitude of the Church arises from the supposition that the words composing the text used in libation either ascribe divinity to the ancestors¹¹²

¹⁰⁷ See also Pobee, op. cit. p. 27.

¹⁰⁸ Refer D. Tait, "The place of Libation in Konkomba ritual", de l'I F.A.N., 1955, pp. 168-72.

¹⁰⁹ Refer Mbiti, op. cit. p. 11.

¹¹⁰ When the Ghana Secondary School, Winneba was officially opened in 1960, there was ceremony which included the pouring of libation.

¹¹¹ Refer Pobee, op. cit. p. 27.

¹¹² See Chapter V for the discussion on Ancestors.

or make use of 'pagan', heathenish and cultic expression.

Research indicates that this assumption is not justified. The traditional specialists like chief linguist Kwame Tekyi of Winneba¹¹³ explains that the rites of libation have a social function in expressing those sentiments on which the solidarity of the group depends and in strengthening the bond of unity between the living and the dead. Pouring of libation is a rite observed without particular religious significance. The traditionalists, however, confess that its commonest use is in approach to the spirit-ancestors or as a homely recognition of their presence and help in much the same way as was done during their physical life - when they were approached by their children for food and help. According to Opanyin Tekyi the ancestors are considered to be agents of the Supreme Being. So in theory when one offers them a drink, one is using their good offices to reach the Supreme Being. One is of the opinion that the pouring of the drink itself is innocuous and can be acceptable to unbiased Christianity. The second claim that the rite is observed without particular religious significance could make an interesting comparison with the British custom of naming a new vessel in which the sponsor of the vessel generally uses a time-honoured phrase, 'I name this ship May God bless her and all who sail in her'.¹¹⁴ This is a rite without a specific religious meaning. It is in a similar way, as the writer sees it, that libation now used. It could be recalled that as late as July, 1960, the ceremony was being practiced at the celebration of the birth of the Ghana Republic; the chairman of the Methodist Church felt unable to be present because of the clash between pouring of libation and its associations, particularly

¹¹³ Chief Linguist Kwame Tekyi is a spokesman of the Omahene of the Effutu State. He has been in that office for more than 30 years. He is now about 90 years old. He is highly esteemed in the Effutu State.

¹¹⁴ Peter Kemp, (ed.) The Oxford Companion to Ships & Seas, London, Oxford Univ. Press, 1976, p. 486.

those relating to ancestor spirits, and the teaching of the Church.¹¹⁵ The writer suggests that since the continuous steady practice of the pouring of libation has survived the Church's injunction should prompt the Church to make further objective critical analysis of and the examination of the texts used in various forms of libation, in order that the Church might speak **responsibly** on the issue. As long as the form of words do not attribute divinity to the dead, a Christian cannot be adverse to it.¹¹⁶

The pouring of libation should not be seen as an isolated issue but should be seen within the context of the overall funeral celebration. A related aspect of the libation is the public participation in the event, where everyone who so wishes takes a drink of beer, soft drinks, whisky or any drink worthy of human consumption. The event itself is a social affair which is very stimulating. During this ceremony, old acquaintances are renewed, and also there is always a reunion of relatives and friends - broken fellowships between friends are resolved and this is the time that an Effutu person would say "Ayi ye dze korye ba" ("the end of grievances can be through death") and also "asomdwee na oma man gyina" ("peace ensures the public good and where there is peace there is stability").

This kind of solidarity is in line with Jesus' teaching that all men are brothers and each is of value because of man's relationship to God, not because of something which he possesses in himself apart from God. Therefore, coming together as brothers

¹¹⁵ Bartels, op. cit. p. 230.

¹¹⁶ See also Pobee, op. cit. p. 27.

and sisters, resolving problems, is an ethic of doing God's will in relation to others - to one's enemies as well as to one's friends - not because they are members of the same species or even because they are brothers, but because they are children of a common Father who loves all and wills their good.

Apart from obsequies which start and end with pouring of a libation, it is an indisputable fact that libation forms an integral part of all of the Africans' social events. Particularly with the Effutu people libation is poured during their Deer Hunting and Akomase festivals, outdooring of a child, puberty, marriages as well as reunion of loved ones and friends. At such social meetings and gatherings, the text of the libation reflects the purpose of the occasion.

Alongside the rite of pouring of libation, is the rite of pouring a little water down the throat of the dying person. This pious rite of the Effutus as seen earlier, could also be compared with the practice of some Protestant Churches which give Holy Communion to the dying person, in Ghana. This practice is, perhaps, an imitation of the Roman Catholic "Last Rites" i.e. the Eucharist given to one in danger of death. So the writer is of the opinion that libation is not inherently incompatible with Christianity, even though the Churches have tended to oppose to it.

The attitude of the Christian Church towards cultural issues like polygamy, drumming and the pouring of libation without keen and thorough examination places the Church under attack in many newly independent African nations and particularly in the Effutu Traditional Area.¹¹⁷ This is because of the Church's tendency to

¹¹⁷ Refer also Arch. diocesan Committee "Libation" Report of the Archdiocesan Committee Appointed to Study African Customs, Cape Coast, 1958, p. 12.

turn her back upon things African. Theological truths only half understood could not hope to make a full impact. It is necessary in this connection to stress 'the need for an intensive study of Christian theological terms in relation to African life and thought, with particular reference to drumming and libation so that their practical Christian application to African conditions may become clearly apparent'.¹¹⁸

It might be helpful for the Christian Church to consider the way in which Jesus dealt with cultural issues in redemption. When God took the initiative to redeem mankind, He came among men as a man, as The Man. He became human, a man of culture. He took a cultural name, Jesus, spoke a local language, received a cultural education, conformed to the cultural mores of His people. He did not become a Roman, an Egyptian, or an Asian, but a very identifiable Jew. He is worshipped as the Universal 'Man' but he became a member of a Jewish home, a part of a small-town community, a Galilean by subculture, and in the eyes of many, especially the Roman officials, he was accused of being a radical rebellious man. Jesus in order to be completely man, chose to participate in a particular culture. He spoke of God, his Father from within the culture, and performed deeds of mercy among his people. A universal man, if a man at all must first become a particular man. One aspect of the incarnation and a very important one, is that the 'Son of Man' revealed the Father in a particular cultural tradition. It is the will of the Father that this method of Christ be the pattern for Christian nurture and evangelism.

¹¹⁸ Commission on the Life of the Church: I will build my Church, 1948, pp. 11-15; Methodist Times op. cit. p. 1.

It is not surprising to find that the Gospel as brought to Africa and particularly to the Effutu people by the missionary movement had a Western tint, for Western missionaries had to speak out of their experience - they had no other.

It is the writer's view that the impact of Western Christianity on the group life and culture of the African particularly the Effutu people, needs to be reconsidered by the Christian Church.

Noteworthy is the following quotation: 'Ceremonies are the bond that holds the multitudes together, and if the bond be removed, these multitudes fall into confusion.' 119

So far it could be seen that in any Effutu funeral, feelings find formal expression in funeral rites. People spend money upon a death, more than upon a birth. This is because the laying out of money with a well conducted establishment, where the thing is performed upon the very best scale, bind the broken heart, and sheds balm upon the wounded spirit. Hearts want binding, and spirits want balm when people die, not when people are born. Here sentiment and gentility join together to assist in producing "that quintessence of sentiment and gentility",¹²⁰ the Effutu funeral.

Finally, from all that has been said we see that the life of the individual Effutu convert is within the ebusua of which he is a member. The convert shares in its group's life, as defined by the society. He shares the reciprocal obligations of that group. He drinks out of its cup, the cup of its group's culture, different from other cups. Group life means more to the Effutu

119 Quoted by Prof. K. A. Busia, in Christianity and African Culture, p. 19, from Confucius Book of Rites.

120 cf. John Morley, Death, Heaven and the Victorians, London: Studio Vista, 1975, p. 18.

than to the Europeans in whose social situation greater emphasis has been placed, on the individual.¹²¹ As a member of that group he takes part in its activities, such as activities which have been brought about by death. The Church is therefore called upon to reconsider its attitude towards the Effutu convert's religious beliefs and practices concerning death and the dead.

In the whole nexus of the Effutu belief and practices associated with death and the dead, the central concept is the belief in future life. It is this notion that provides the cognitive basis for the transformation of the human being into an ancestor. The cult of the dead as manifested in drumming, dancing, pouring of libation, gift of other material objects, prayer (verbal offering) and the 'payment of respect' by other forms of gesture, have been understood by the Church as worship of the ancestors. Thus the worship of the ancestors implies not only the idea of survival, but also the active participation of the dead in mundane affairs. Our task, therefore, is primarily to investigate about how the Effutu people concern themselves for the departed.

¹²¹ See Chapter 6.

CHAPTER V

THE CONTINUING CONCERN FOR THE DEPARTED AND THE LIVING.

Exploring the structure of Effutu lineage in Chapter I, we saw that household-families and extended families on the mother's side, at one end of the scale, and the agnetic kinship, at the other end, give rise to the cult of the ancestors. This emphasizes the close link that exists in Effutu cosmology between the world of the living and the world of the living-dead,¹ the ancestors. We have also seen that death among the Effutu is not felt as an instantaneous destruction of an individual's life. Death is like an initiation into a social after life, marking a kind of rebirth, a social event, the starting point of a ceremonial process whereby the dead person becomes an ancestor.

It is ancestors that this Chapter is concerned with - to see the activities and relationships between these ancestors and the living. To do this therefore, the following areas are going to be considered:

1. Ancestors as elders.
2. The place of ancestors in the Effutu cosmology.
- 3. Consciousness that the dead and the living are co-existent.
- 4. The standpoint of Christian Faith.

As discussed in Chapter IV, the dead are well dressed and are given food and drink and gold dust to help them on their journey to the world of the ancestors which the Effutus call 'Nyimpo Ye' - the palace of God. Receptacles, bedding or

¹ cf. Mbiti, op. cit. p. 107.

ornaments, and clothing which it is believed they will require in the new world, are buried with them, and the newly dead are asked to convey messages to the ancestors.

Ancestors as Elders:² The Effutus have no term that can be translated as 'ancestor'. Both the living and the dead members of the ebusua family are referred to as Anipa/Mpanyimfo, or Ate/Neniyi/Nanaanom, the 'big ones', the 'old ones', those who have attained maturity, those older than oneself: collectively, the term Anipa/Mpanyimfo or Ate/Nanaanom refers to the ruling elders of an ebusua family. Neniyi/Nana or Onipa/Opanyin (singular) is anyone who is older than I. Within the ebusua, my Anipa/Mpanyimfo or Aneniyi/Nanaanom collectively are all the members of the ebusua who are older than I, whether they are alive or dead.

In administration pertaining to rights and obligations, where authority is vested over-whelmingly in the males, the term is effectively narrowed to all one's male seniors. The ebusua is thus seen to be divided into two groups: "those above me who are my Anipa/Mpanyimfo or Aneniyi/Nanaanom (elders) and those below me - my Amonawo/Amonafo (juniors) - to whom I am an elder". By contrast, no semantic distinction is made within the ebusua or the lineage between those who are alive and those who are dead.

By the Effutus' moral standards an Onipa/Opanyin or Neniyi/Nana - in fact any elder - represents to a junior the entire legal

² Igor Kopytoff, "Ancestors as Elders in Africa" Africa XLI, 1971, p. 131. It is not an automatic thing for one to be called an elder/ancestor in any ebusua. Therefore not everybody becomes an ancestor. To be able to protect the ebusua one should be of certain age, e.g. about 40 years and above as well as having experience. For that reason babies, infants, and adolescents are excluded from becoming ancestors. (Kimble's age group table, therefore is applicable here) - see Kimble, G. H. T. Tropical Africa Society and Polity, Volume 2, New York, 1960, p. 11. According to Ebusuapanyin Neniyi Gyankuma of Winneba, Ebusuapanyin Opanyin Gyan of Ateitu and Ebusuapanyin Onipa Kow Tetteh of Nsuekyir, those who died of hideous disease such as leprosy or those who committed suicide are also excluded from this honour. Effutu people have no shrines which serve as the focal point of popular veneration in memory of those who gave their lives for their family or state.

and mystical authority of the lineage. Effutu say in their aphorism that "Opanvin n'ano sen suman" - "the word of the elder is more potent than fetish". The very fact of eldership confers upon a person mystical powers over the junior. He can curse his junior in the name of the lineage, thereby removing from him the mystical protection of the lineage. The curse can be formal and public, but it can also be secret and even unconscious. An Effutu is under the "umbrella" of the power of his ebusua; removal of this protection exposes him to the outside world, and the world is a dangerous place to be in when one is not attached to an ebusua.³ It is a common saying among the Effutu that a curse,⁴ is an 'open sesame' to unpleasantness; though it may not actively cause misfortune. An elder's curse, always implicitly made in the name of the lineage, can only be removed by an older elder - one to whom the previous elder is a junior.

Here one sees that lineage authority and representation of the lineage to the outside world are organized on a continuum of age, that is, of relative eldership. Within this formal continuum based purely on relative age, there ^{are} ~~is~~ also the principles of generational solidarity.⁵ There is always a very

³ Onina Kow Dantse - Aboradzi ebusuapanyin of Winneba, Nenya Kow Amansuon - Nsona ebusuapanyin of Nsuekyir and Opanyin Impraim - Anona ebusuapanyin of Gyihadze maintain that even a mad person who roams about in the street is counted in an ebusua. He is cared for with the funds of the ebusua.

⁴ cf. The O.T. prophets - Hosea, for example - when they heap curses on the infidelity of the people of Israel to Yahweh, comparing it to prostitution, establish a connection between the nation's immoral conduct and the sterility with which adulterous women are afflicted or the ephemeral life of any children which they may somehow bring to birth. Hosea, IV; 10; IX, 14, 16b.

⁵ See also Marion J. Levy, Jr. The Family Revolution in Modern China, London, O.U. Press, 1949, pp. 164-165.

close link between lineage members of the same generation. They tend toward greater though never actual equality. Thus, the inequality of power and authority is most pronounced between generations. Under normal circumstances, it is considered very presumptuous for the younger generation to question the decisions of the older generation and the ways in which they have been arrived at. It is the generation above one that represents to me the full authority of the lineage; generational solidarity as well as intergenerational distance means that, unless I have knowledge to the contrary, I must assume that the decision of one senior represents the decision of all seniors. In simple terms, every junior owes enyidze ('honour', 'respect') to his seniors, be they elders or 'ancestors' "in Western terminology".⁶

On formal occasions when a junior approaches a senior the offer of palm wine* is necessary. Before the senior drinks he should first pour a libation, thus giving the first share to the living-dead elders. The living-dead must of necessity be approached differently from the living; interaction with them necessarily appears one sided and conversations with them necessarily become monologues. Also, interaction with them is necessarily less frequent and when it occurs, it is formal - but no less formal than is the interaction with the living elders on ceremonial occasions. And though the reasons for action by any elder are often obscure to the juniors, actions by the 'living-dead' elders are particularly obscure since no explanations from them are even possible. Indeed, though, there is a difference

⁶ cf. Kopytoff, op. cit. p. 133.

* Nowadays a bottle of dry gin or schnaps is used when a junior approaches a senior especially during arbitrations, marriage and seeking for an advise.

in the manner in which the 'living-dead' elders are approached as compared with the living, yet the difference is related to their different physical states, even while they remain in the same structural positions socially vis-a-vis their juniors.⁷

In the above comparative linguistic analysis, it could be seen that the Effutu people linguistically make no distinction between ancestors and elders since differential and respectful behaviours towards both is a reflection of a gerontocratic system where a junior must honour and obey anyone senior to him.

The place of the elder/ancestors in the Effutu cosmology

The Effutu people have no shrine for their 'ancestors'. Their emphasis is not on how the 'living-dead' live but on the manner in which they affect the living. This is because the dead qua dead are believed to stand nearer to God, the Oboadze, (Creator), and that they know more and see things that the living elders do not; they are therefore deemed to be more powerful⁸ and helpful and can hear the 'prayers' of their descendents. It could also be said that the living man is happier than the departed because he is alive. But the departed are more powerful than the living.⁹

In all the four events of the life cycle - that is to say, birth, puberty, marriage and death - marking the entry of the individual into this world of living men and his subsequent

⁷ See also Kopytoff, *ibid.* p. 134..

⁸ To introduce a personal note, I had no difficulty in the field in accepting the idea that the dead elder/ancestor should have 'supernatural' powers. But I must have driven my informants to distraction by insisting on pursuing the question of the 'why' and the 'where' from the powers of the living elders. It took a kind of methodological (and cultural) leap of faith to accept as a terminal ethnographic datum, that if the 'living-dead' can appropriately do supernatural things then the living elders also can.

⁹ See also John V. Taylor, *op. cit.* p. 156.

departure from it the 'elders/ancestors' play important role and so they are called upon. Their primary concern, to which their concentrated power-force is directed, is always the preservation of the human family, the ebusua to which they still belong, for it is as true of them as of the living that they are because they participate. Hence their continual anxiety lest the living allow them to slip into oblivion or spoil the solidarity and health of the human group by breach of custom or bad relationships. It is this anxiety which gives rise to their attempts to communicate with the living - i.e., through dreams.

When a child is born to a couple the naming or the outdoor ceremony follows. In the Effutu world-view, if the child is named after a living elderly person, the baby must be shown to him or her. It is generally hoped that the baby will grow up to be like the person after whom it has been named. The living person would ensure that his mana, tum, entered into the child by means of a speck of spittle. But in normal cases the child is named after an 'ancestor' whose mana, tum is believed to enter the child. The child, therefore, is believed to have certain traits of the living-dead, 'ancestor'. This child is then thought of to be a partial 'reincarnation' of the living-dead, for a man's memorial is not in some monument but in his children. The living-dead (ancestor) persons are remembered in their names, and this is very important to the Effutu people. Every Effutu likes to feel that his or her name will never be forgotten as long as his or her lineage remains and that in that sense he or she will always be a part of the lineage. In this way intimacy is not broken

by death.¹⁰ It is to ensure the survival of the 'living-dead' in their names that the Effutu practise levirate marriage (cf. Deut. 25/5-6). The memory of a 'living-dead' (ancestor) is thus kept alive by its being constantly on the people's lips through the favoured patronymic usage during the life time of his children and afterwards in the recitation of a line of descent.¹¹

After the naming ceremony, the child has still a long way to go. He 'travels' through childhood and enters into adulthood both physically, socially and religiously. This is also a change from passive to active membership in the ebusua and the entire community.

Unlike most Akan tribes, the Effutu have no puberty rites for boys,¹² only for girls and this is known as bradze.¹³ Puberty (bradze) is considered the most important stage after birth since it is the genesis of womanhood. The main rites are those of purification, transformation and fertility in which the 'living-dead' play active role. On such occasions before libation is poured the most elderly woman of the ebusua calls on God, the giver of Okra (soul) without which the blood of the mother and the spirit of the father would not have been effective, to bless the girl. After this libation is poured

¹⁰ For an interesting account of this unbrokenness which tallies with what Effutu/Akan belief see Maurice Freedman, Lineage Organization in South Eastern China, N.Y., Humanities Press Inc. 1980, p. 85.

¹¹ See also E. E. Evans-Pritchard, Nuer Religion, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956, p. 163. I thank Ebusuapanyin Kow Dantse and Obaahemba (queenmother) Aba Sasako for the information on the naming rites.

¹² This was explained by the fact that formerly men were circumcised before they got married. But this practice died out gradually due to the influence of the West. But now every male is circumcised at birth.

¹³ This section on bradze and the part played by the living-dead is a summary of the various traditional puberty rite the writer observed between 1983 and 1985, and the conversation about them with Obaapanyin (elder) Affua Kaadze of Winneba, Obaapanyin (elder) Adwowa Mansa of Nsuekyir and Obaapanyin (elder) Ekua Bondzewa of Gyahadze. These are all specialists in bradze rite.

to the 'living-dead', ancestors, especially to the one whose name the girl bears, to protect her as her grandmother.

The text of a libation poured is as follows:

Nana Eku this is liquor,
Nana Kwaaba¹⁴ this is liquor,
Twerampon¹⁵ this is liquor,
The elders this is liquor,
The ancestors of Anona, come and accept your liquor.
We call all today for your good guidance on this girl
who is now a woman.
Drink well the liquor.
Twerampon bless and protect all,
Take this liquor.¹⁶

Drumming, singing and dancing are at their highest when the girl has been richly adorned in Kente cloth and seated.¹⁷ More puberty songs are sung. An opening shout of thanksgiving precedes these songs. Thanks may be given first to Twerampon, The Creator of all things and the controller of all things, and then to the 'living-dead.' The singers usually say:

Kundé, Kundé,
Egyandé eguadsé yéi
Propro Kruman
Saana obedzi ... Yaasow
Ese bedzi Konkonté kowa.¹⁸

which is literally translated in English

Shout for joy,
Joy, joy,
Thank the Father, the ancestor
Eat well
Have happy life.

¹⁴ Nana Eku was the ancestress the girl was named after. Nana Kwaaba was the mother of Nana Eku. It is therefore important to name them when a libation is being poured. The field work was conducted in September, 1983 at Winneba.

¹⁵ Twerampon is another pre-Christian name referring to the Supreme deity or being.

¹⁶ The original text in Fante is given in Appendix F1. As said earlier in the thesis Effutu people use Fante mostly in such affairs.

¹⁷ It is the usual practice among the Effutu to dress the girl with some clothes of the ancestress she bears her name.

¹⁸ The writer is grateful to Effua Akyer an expert in this custom for the information obtained during the field work in March, 1985 at Winneba.

With reference to marriage, it is the responsibility of the father to arrange his son's marriage. He defrays all the marriage expenses. The father pays for the aseda offering as well as bride-wealth. A portion of the rum, gin or whisky, which invariable accompanies the aseda, is given as a libation to the 'living-dead' (ancestors) who thus, together with the living, become witnesses to the contract. The words of libation poured is as follows:

The people of Anona ebusua is celebrating a marriage,
We have therefore come to perform the necessary rituals,
All the living-dead of Anona
We are calling on all of you
Come and accept your liquor,
Protect K and M, and make their marriage be a peaceful
one as you would wish them to be if alive.
We do not need accidental death,
We do not need illness and in fact mortality,
Help them to have many children
probably twins upon twins.
Mpanyinfo accept your liquor.¹⁹

Their blessing is also invoked upon the new couple for children and peaceful marriage.²⁰ After the pouring of libation, the most elderly woman performs the ceremony of giving the bride to the bridegroom. She first asks the blessing of God, then the blessings of the 'living-dead', ancestors and the living. Three times this elderly woman presents the bride with many good wishes first from Twerampon, then the ancestors and the living. This strangely mingled sentiment of

¹⁹ This was a text of a libation poured during a marriage of one Kuntu and Mansa of Anona ebusua in Winneba. This was during the writer's field work in 1985 at Winneba. The original text in Fante was recorded on 4th August, 1985 is given in Appendix FII.

²⁰ Marriage among the Effutu like other Akan societies is a contract between two groups, the woman's and the man's clans, and for the security of both parties it is surrounded by definite customs and laws. Effutu/Akan marriage does not result from love, its entire foundation lying in the desire for children. Every child has a place in the ebusua even though it may be born out of wedlock, i.e. without the transference of aseda thanksgiving or Tsirsa (lit. head-rum, begging-fee. cf. for example. J. W. A. Amoo, "The Effect of Western Influence on Akan Marriage", Africa, XVI, 1946, p. 228.)

awe, anxiety and affection which the living feel towards the 'ancestors' is a true replica of the traditional relationship of children to their father.²¹

Not only do the Effutu call upon the living-dead on occasions of birth, puberty and marriage but also in their festivals. Unlike other Akan tribes, it is only the Effutu who have the 'Deer Hunting Festival' and the 'Akomase Festival'. It is the latter that concerns us here. The Akomase is a 'remembrance day' for the 'living-dead'. The Akomase falls on every first Saturday of August. On such an occasion every ebusua meets from morning till evening. They visit the graves where libation is poured, amidst wailing and weeping. At a family meeting, the people recapitulate the deeds of the ancestors of the ebusua. Sacrifices and offerings²² are made to the 'living-dead', ancestors. This is also the time for settling family disputes. Stories are also told to the young ones about their great-grandfathers, mothers, aunts, uncles etc. There is also a family meal as sign of solidarity. Apart from individual ebusua gatherings on such an occasion, there is also a gathering of the Paramount Chief (King) of the Effutu Traditional Area and his people. On such occasions, there

²¹ This is a summary of the various traditional marriages the writer observed between 1983 and 1985. Thanks must be given to Opanyin Kweekum of Winneba, Obaahemba Bondzewa of Ateitu and Opanyin Kweku Appea of Gyahadze who supplied the writer with more information on some aspects of traditional marriage in the Effutu locality. For a confirmation of what is obtained in other Akan societies see J. M. Sarbah, Fante Customary Law, London, 1968, and J. B. Danquah, Akan Laws and Customs and the Akim Abuakwa Constitution, London, 1928.

²² There are distinctions between the terms 'sacrifice' and offering. Whereas the term 'sacrifices' refer to cases where animal life is destroyed in order to present the animal, in part or in whole, to God, supernatural beings, spirits or living-dead, 'offerings', refer to the remaining cases which do not involve the killing of an animal, being chiefly the presentation of the foodstuffs and other items. In some cases, sacrifices and offerings are directed to one or more of the following: God, spirits and living-dead. Recipients in the second and third categories are regarded as intermediaries between God and men, "so that God is the ultimate Recipient whether or not the people who are sacrificing or offering are aware of that". Nbiti, op. cit. p. 76. This tallies also with the Effutu people's attitude towards the living-dead.

is always the mingled feelings of sorrow and of pride which animates the whole of the Effutu Traditional Area. This is also known as 'State Mourning'.²³ The Effutu State recalls men and women who died in the wars²⁴ and more especially their own relatives and friends. It is a State's heartfelt tribute to its own grandest aspirations. As a sign of respect, libation is poured, asking the 'living-dead' for their protection and blessings on the State. They are also asked to prevent any mishappenings but prosperity and plenty catch of fish. A goat or sheep is then slaughtered. The meat of which is shared among the ebusua members signifying solidarity. The people at once pay their homage to those who proved their capability of the greatest devotion. This tradition is alluded to in a Effutu horn blower's ^{ll}appellation for the Omanhen of the Effutu State, which expresses ideas of battle cry: it is as follows:

²³ This could be compared with The Christian All Souls Day, on November, 2nd which follows directly after All Saints Day, in some Christian traditions commemorates all the ordinary dead: requiem masses are celebrated for their repose cf. also Armistice Day. After World War I, the public commemoration of the fallen was instituted on November 11, the day of the armistice in 1918, in many of the countries concerned; the memory of the dead was solemnly recalled in a two minute silence during the ceremony. Artificial red poppies made in aid of Earl Haig's British Legion Appeal Fund are worn. In Ghana it is known as Poppy Day. S. G. F. Brandon, "Death Rites and Customs" Encyclopedia Britannica, 15 ed. (1982) p. 537.

²⁴ A recent one was in 1945 when fighting broke out between the Police and the two Asafo Companies who wanted to destool Nana Ayirebi Acquah III, the King of the Effutu Traditional Area. His car was destroyed by fire and there was a great loss of life. Nana Ayirebi Acquah was exiled to Accra. It was during the time of the Convention People's Party Government led by the late Dr. Kwame Nkrumah that the then Omanhene of the Effutu State could step foot again on the Effutu soil. This was obtained from Supi Odonsu during the writer's field work in September, 1983. See also David Kimble, A Political History of Ghana, Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1963, p. 507.

Kweku Ananse²⁵ - the spider - has toiled in vain,
The mighty Ayirebi has toiled in vain²⁶
The Odabikese²⁷ Ayirebi has toiled in vain,
Kweku Ananse has toiled in vain.
The conqueror of the porcupine is worthy of appellation.
Who is he? He is the noble Ayirebi Acquah.
Odabikese Ayirebi can confront the enemy;
Ayirebi can confront anybody.
Who is capable of taking away the eggs of a viper?
The noble Ayirebi can do that.
The valiant one: the valiant one: the valiant one!
You are a great warrior from antiquity
You are always a warrior²⁸

The people also acknowledge a debt the magnitude of which has perhaps not yet been conceived. The wailing and weeping is the eternal symbol of all that was volunteered and sacrificed by those who went forth to battle in the great struggles of the past.

The festival ends with the final pouring of libation amidst firing of musketry by the two Asafo Companies as a sign of bravery. They call on God and then on all the living-dead for their protection as they did when alive.

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- ²⁵ In Effutu/Akan mythology the spider, that is Kweku Ananse, is regarded as the creator, probably because of how its webs and gets its prey. For some myths about the spider see Richard M. Dorson, The British Folklorist, London, 1968, p. 1; 'Anansesem in Gold Coast Schools,' Gold Coast Review, V, 1934, pp. 125-143. Also Margaret Musson, Mr. Spider and his Friends, London, 1953, pp. 1-16.
- ²⁶ 'Has toiled in vain' reflects on how human beings created by the creator may not return from the battle field. It shows a sense of loss and hopelessness. Only those who return from the battlefield are considered as heroes or valiant warriors.
- ²⁷ Odabikese means 'a great warrior'. See also J. H. Nketia, Funeral Dirges of the Akan People, Achimota, 1955, p. 28.
- ²⁸ The original text in Akan or Fante language was recorded on 5th August, 1985 and is given in Appendix F III.

In all, it is believed that the 'living-dead' ancestors in their turn will participate in the festivities of the home; they will receive news of important changes in the lives of their descendants (such as betrothals, marriages, births, deaths and social advancement), will give advice on important matters through, for instance dreams, when it is solicited, and use whatever powers they may have from God as grandparents in the other world to bring benefits to those they have left on earth.

We have seen how the living-dead are considered as elders as well as their role in the Effutu cosmology. In all that has been said above, one could ask whether or not this continuing relationship with the ebusua members and respected elders who have departed this life co-exist. And if they do in what sense. This we are to examine. Consciousness that the ancestors and the living are co-existent.

In Chapter 2 it could be said that the typical Effutu sense of evanescence of life may seem to be a nuance of the theme of acceptance of death to Westerners. It therefore could be said, however, that, far from accepting death, Effutu like Akan culture actually embraces death, or is a culture which can be described as moving from "death to life".²⁹ The symbolic of this is when the people visit the graves, during especially Akomase. In Western culture, based on Christianity, such a custom or interest in visiting graves is not popular. In Ghana in general and among the Effutu people in particular, this is one of the popular religious behaviours.³⁰ According to Nana Ayirebi

²⁹ M. Hashimoto, Thoughts on the Fleeting World: The Japanese Outlook on Life, Kodansha, 1975, pp. 147ff.

³⁰ On Saturday, 15 September 1985, the writer accompanied some friends (who had travelled all the way from Accra to celebrate the fifth anniversary of their father's death) to the grave of their father. Unfortunately when we arrived at the public cemetery we saw that the cemetery had been cleared for new buildings to be put up. However we stood by the street, poured a libation amidst wailing and weeping. Instances of this is very common. Winneba, the capital of Effutu is developing rapidly. There is fear that the present cemetery which is about three miles outskirt of the town would one day be cleared for buildings to be put up.

Acquah IV, the Paramount Chief of the Effutu Traditional Area, the people do not only on the anniversaries of people's deaths, but also at the important turns of their life, they visit the cemetery to report about themselves and recent events of their life to the 'living-dead'. Ebusuapanyin Kow Dantse remarked: "We do it because we will not feel right if we fail to do so".³¹

Informants maintain that many of the survivors of 'May, June, July Crisis'³² felt that talking literally to their 'living-dead' put their mind at ease.³³ This is more than just a ceremony, but is an act of joining with the 'living-dead'.

There is another interesting point about this co-existence which needs mentioning. In this relationship between the 'living-dead' and the living, it could be discovered that the members of the ebusua may only address the 'living-dead' in prayer; but in communicating with the 'living-dead' it is done through the intermediaries. It is believed that the senior person in the house is in practice the main routine line between the living-dead and the members of the lineage. This is why in the Effutu household there is bound to be an old person always present in order to pour libation to the living-dead, reporting the arrival of strangers as well as family members working abroad.

In fact communication with the living-dead, takes the form of a conversational monologue pattern but not stereotyped, and devoid

³¹ This was the writer's conversation with him on 14th September, 1985. This was during the writer's field work.

³² In May, June, July, 1983, there was a great famine in Ghana of which great number of people died. This was due to a long draught which hit the country. Aids were sent from foreign countries but this was to no avail.

³³ An interesting comparison could be made with the survivors of Hiroshima atomic bomb. Refer S. Kato, M. Reich, and R. J. Lifton, Japanese Views on Life and Death, Vol. 1, Iwanami Shoten, 1977, p. 15.

of repetitive formulae. One speaks the way one speaks to the living people: Anaanyi ane abo nsama nsi, ane bibim do. Ane mini siantsir né. Ani mini nyaa mabo né. Se ane afaa, aninya mfuei, ndé ane kora ane. Se ane mbo pēmbi a ane pa ha. Mma ane bo na mu wu. Ebusua wó pii amo a wo só na ane de ané wu.³⁴ (The living-dead elders, your junior is ill. We do not know why, we do not know the one responsible. If it is you, if you are angry, we ask your forgiveness. Do not let him die. Other lineages are propering and our people are dying).

In the above text, we see that the words typically combine complaints, scolding, sometimes even anger and at the same time appeals for forgiveness. Furthermore, the Effutu like Akan fear their living-dead who are believed to be constantly watching over their living relatives. They believe that the living-dead punish those who break the customs, or fail to fulfil their obligations to their kin folk. "To such people they send misfortune and illness or even death".³⁵

In all things the Effutu people treat their 'living-dead' as they do the elders who are living. The 'living-dead' retain their role in the affairs of their kin-group and only of their kin-group.

On the whole, there is a strong intimacy between the living and the living-dead, and that from death to life, is in actual fact, the culture of co-existence of the living-dead with the living, which

³⁴ This was a text recorded when a libation was being poured on an occasion when a junior member of Anona ebusua was taken ill. This was during the writer's field work in 26th September, 1985 at Winneba.

³⁵ See also K. A. Busia, in African Worlds, London, Oxford University Press, p. 201.

sees death and life as being intimately related to each other.

One of the notable characteristics of the African Religions which has enhanced their attractiveness to the African in general and Effutu in particular is their emphasis on ancestral veneration. What Takagi Hiroo writes about the Japanese tallies with what Effutu/Akan believes. He writes that 'ancestor worship has become such an inseparable part of popular ... religion that without it there is no possibility of spreading religious teachings among the masses'.³⁶ Thus, following the death of a relative or loved one, the living-dead is considered to be still nearby, desiring, needing, appreciating the solicitous attention of living descendants, household members and loved ones as was true before death. A similar responsibility is felt toward the living-dead as toward the living (although expressed in a somewhat different fashion). Such virtues as showing respect, expressing thanks, giving encouragement, etc., to the living are extended to the living-dead. Effutu traditional emphasis upon the importance of formal and informal greetings (nkyea), on keeping in communication with relatives through periodic home-comings (like Akomasi, Deer Hunting Festival, etc.) and the sense of dependence upon others could all be included in what is called "ancestor worship/veneration". The fact that this custom is so deeply rooted in African history and continues to be so widely practiced^s in the present day makes it important for foreigners (especially missionaries) to seek to understand its meaning.

³⁶ Takagi Hiroo, 'Shinko Shukyo', (New Religions), Tokyo: Kodansha, 1958, p. 179.

The consciousness that the living-dead and the living co-exist symbolizes the unity of the ebusua which form the Effutu Traditional Area.³⁷ The main thing is to be in this relationship. The "from death to life" culture as we may put it, is very much found to be operative.

With the above mentioned areas examined seriatim, we are to know the Christian response from the standpoint of Faith.

The Standpoint of Christian Faith: In Chapter 2 we examined the standpoint of Christian faith with regard to death. By faith Christians believe that death has been conquered and that they have been translated into the kingdom of their resurrected Lord.³⁸ Christians believe that the believer is risen with Christ and his resurrection is no longer merely a hope. They believe rather, that through the resurrection, which is said to be the substance of life, death is conquered and mortality will be swallowed up in life through the realization of the resurrection promised to mankind. Christians further believe that man has now become a being who does not see himself in death but sees himself in Christ, so it is not death that rules man but the resurrected Lord.

This standpoint, however, is applicable only to those "who died in the Lord",³⁹ and not to all dead people in general. This is a

³⁷ According to Opanyin Yweku Rondze, (95), the ex-ebusuapanyin of Nsona ebusua of Winneba, Ebusuapanyin Kow Dantse of Twedan ebusua, and Nenyi Gyankuma, a sub-chief of Winneba, the settlement at the present Effutu land was made by ebusua kuw, (groups of families). One of the head of such families was Osimpan who is claimed to be leader and the founder of Effutu Traditional Area as said earlier in Chapter 1.

³⁸ See also P. Sarpong in The Ghana Bulletin of Theology, p. 2. 'To the believer then, this ... promise is a consoling source of hope.'

³⁹ See Methodist Church Leaders' Meeting, Winneba, Minutes Book, Meeting held on 24th February, 1985. Section on 'Funerals'.

problem, for in this lies the reason why Christianity fails to get across deeply to the Effutu converts who are deeply rooted in their culture particularly those concerning the 'living-dead' and the living co-existent, no matter how ~~hard~~ Christianity tries to confront this culture. Is it not time for the Church to change the angle of her view? The writer sees two suggestions: in C. S. Lewis' The Problem of Pain.⁴⁰ Lewis maintains that rituals for the dead have two elements. Man has a fear of death⁴¹ on the other hand, man has unlimited affection toward the dead. These two elements must be clearly distinguished from each other in spite of the fact that they are interwoven in a complex manner as they undergird the rituals for the dead. The second suggestion is found in Peter Sarpong's "Some Sociological Reflections on Death" in The Ghana Bulletin of Theology,⁴² 'The main activities owe their meaning and existence usually not to things which are mainly earthly, but to the peoples' conception of the universe. In particular they spring from a belief in a life after death. ... there is belief in a world of the dead People believe strongly that the dead visit the living, that the dead invisibly participate in the life of this world'.

People believe that ties of kithship and of kinship with the living are not broken by death. For these reasons the living are

⁴⁰ C. S. Lewis, The Problem of Pain, Fontana Books, 1940.

⁴¹ See also Sir James G. Frazer, The Fear of the Dead in Primitive Religion, London Macmillan, 1936.

⁴² P. Sarpong, in Ghana Bulletin of Theology, V. 3, No. 9, 1970, p. 6.

anxious to keep in good relations with the living-dead. They eager to remember them, to please them, to show concern for them, and to identify themselves with them. What is even more important, the living are eager to please the dead so that they in turn may grant them favours both spiritual and material.⁴³ Noteworthy also is the following quotation: "Ceremonies are the bond that holds the multitudes together, and if the bond be removed, these multitudes fall into confusion".⁴⁴

Christianity does not reject affection toward the dead. The story of acquiring land in Canaan is a story of buying a burying place. Jacob wanted to be buried with his fathers.⁴⁵ He wept and mourned for the dear one who had died. Jesus Christ wept and had compassion on one who was grieving over the death of her beloved son.⁴⁶ These are natural feelings. The writer therefore suggests that, it is important for Christian ministers to make sure that they give more attention, and over a longer period of time, to the ebusua members of the deceased. They should give more attention to the family members of the deceased than the family members to the deceased one in terms of funeral service.

The writer further suggests that we should not call those rituals and sentiments which grow out of such natural feelings

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Quoted by Prof. K. A. Busia, in Christianity and African Culture, p. 19, from Confucius Book of Rites.

⁴⁵ See Genesis 50:5f.

⁴⁶ See Luke 7:13.

contrary to the Bible.⁴⁷ Rather, Christians should share such feelings and realize that one of the roles Christians are expected to play lies in the area of these rituals. Apart from the 'grave-visits', any behaviour growing out of affection toward the living-dead is indeed rooted in feelings and emotions which are far more basic than the feelings of religious faith. We are not to confront but rather accept this sort of behaviour.

Another striking question comes in the element of fear in the rituals for the living-dead, which could be argued for the content of ancestor worship. From such fear all sorts of superstitious and folkways originate. Also this element is intentionally used for political and social purposes to create the so-called 'condemned lineage'. Rituals for the 'living-dead' which grew out of affection are not totally immune to the inroad of superstitious folkways, but there is room for adjustment between Christianity and folkways at this point. There is no room for adjustment between Christianity and the element of fear referred to above, however, because from the Christian standpoint such fear has been conquered.

At the same time, from the writer's observation and participation⁴⁸ in the Effutu folkways, it could be argued that what seems to the

⁴⁷ See also John Mbiti, The Prayers of Africa Religions, London, S.P.C.K., 1975, p. 106; David E. Apter, The Gold Coast in Transition, Princeton Univ. Press, 1955, p. 128. To this may be added St. John Evans, H. 'The Akan Doctrine of God' in African Ideas of God, ed. E. W. Smith, London, Edinburgh Press, 1950, p. 243.

⁴⁸ In March, 1985 the writer had an opportunity of participating in some rituals for the living-dead. The rituals consisted of the pouring of libation and slaughtering of a sheep. It was an occasion when a member of Anona ebusua had returned from overseas after his studies.

missionaries to be a craven 'fear' for the living-dead, could, from within the extended family, be experienced as a simple extension of reverential awe due to elders whether dead or alive. The words of Singleton could be of help here. Singleton asks "... was the numinous dread of ancestors significantly other than the deferential respect for parental authority included in Victorian Families".⁴⁹

It is one thing to remember one's ancestors fondly. It is an entirely different matter to believe that ancestors are co-existing with the living and that rituals for them are therefore necessary. It is at this point where confrontation between Christianity and ancestor worship⁵⁰ takes place. This is exactly the area where the message of the conquest of death should be proclaimed to those who fear death. To profess Christian faith in the midst of the culture of the co-existence of the living-dead and the living is to profess a faith which introduces a new element of relationship into that culture. That is the relationship between the victorious Lord on the one side and both the dead and the living on the other. This new relationship should not threaten the growth of natural human sentiments and feelings. It should rather endorse the kind of dialogue which leads to find true solace.

⁴⁹ See M. Singleton, Pro Mundi Bulletin LXVII, 1977, p. 3.

⁵⁰ It is sometimes believed that the idea of ancestor worship has been abandoned.

CHAPTER VI

TOWARDS THE FUTURE - A TENTATIVE CONCLUSION

This thesis began to unravel some of the theological problems of the Church's understanding of death and the dead with reference to the Effutu traditional beliefs and practices. In Chapter 2 the Effutu and the contemporary Christians' understanding of death were considered. Whether or not there is an embodied or disembodied existence after death were discussed from the Effutu and the contemporary Christians' perspective, in Chapter 3. In Chapter 4, certain funeral rites, which are in conflict with the Church's practices, were seen to be the hub of the wheel of the Effutu people's cultural life without which any funeral celebration has no significance. Thereafter, the continuing concern for the departed and the Christian standpoint of faith was discussed in Chapter 5, a crucial distinction.

This Chapter will therefore reflect areas where conflict arises: in particular; 1. death; 2. individualism; 3. Witchcraft; 4. Polygamy. All this discussion will help to attempt to formulate a theology which must be understood in the context of African life and culture and the creative attempt of African peoples to shape a new future that is different from the colonial past and the neo-colonial present.

In February 1948 after the British Governor's detention orders on Kwame Nkrumah, Dr. Danquah and four

other members of their party, the country woke up, literally overnight, to the conviction that it was time to have done with alien rule. From now on they would govern themselves.¹ The fires that were sweeping through Africa were not to leave the Church untouched.

Because the tension up to this point had been between the Church and its missionary leaders, albeit largely hidden, and not a tension of existence between the Church and the state, the internal self-government and independence which followed February 1948 found the Church in Ghana somewhat uncertain of itself.² For indeed, the inception of the Church in the Effutu Traditional Area, as in Ghana in general, had been basically the result of missionary endeavour, and reflected denominational Christianity of the west. This has carried along with it some "seeds of the questionings that have become associated with the term African theology".³ It is unquestionably true that since the last century the Church in the Effutu land has become a strong institution and that Church membership has increased so significantly, in a way, that euphoric prognostications of future growth are being made. In the Church itself, one observes that the Christian who has been instructed in the Church's teaching before becoming a full member is

¹ T. A. Deetham, Christianity and the New Africa, London: Pall Mall Press, 1967, p. 135.

² Ibid.

³ Kwesi Dickson, "African Theology - Methodology and Contents" in J. Rel. Thought, XXXII, 1975, p. 34.

found to have entered the Church without leaving his traditional world-view behind. In the light of this the following observation has been made:

"The convert enters the Church as a traditional Akan attracted to an institution whose demands and concepts are basically foreign to him. However great the attraction, and however sincere his attachment to the Church, he cannot deny himself, or the society within which he has been nurtured. He carries within himself, his traditional outlook and attitude, the religious and social valuations of his people. What he hears he interprets in his own thoughts. He seeks to fit the Church's demands and teaching into his own social and religious moulds. It is not therefore surprising that wherever one turns in the Church the religious and social valuations of the Akan people manifest themselves".⁴

In the face of this observation it could be argued that the Effutu, like any Akan Christian, has not become truly converted. This could very well be so, even though the possibility would exist that such a view would be an overgeneralization. In any case, it would be truer to say that the Christ, as he had been presented to the Effutu people, as to the Akan, was not found to fit into their scheme of things. In addition to this, one has to take account of the situation of African ministers who, until very recently, were trained and brought up on what was impeccably in line with the Western type of training, and were indeed usually trained by Western theologians who had themselves been taught in some of the best known theological colleges in the West.⁵ The end-result is that many an African minister is left in limbo and is incapable of applying the theology learned in the seminary

⁴ Williamson, op. cit. p. 74.

⁵ See Dickson, op. cit. p. 36.

to the practicalities of his work among his own members. Christianity has been so presented as to suggest that it is necessary for the African to enter into the Western world to become Christian.

This is implicitly seen in the interpretation of Christian doctrines which are often the result of biblical truth being interpreted in a Western way, which interpretation may obscure some aspect of the faith or indeed omit reference to matters which are taken account of in the scriptures but which are not part of the active, living experience of Western Christians and theologians.

For instance, with reference to death, the Effutu convert, who is also deeply rooted in his tradition, and who tries to relate his traditional understanding of death to the meaning of Christ's work, could argue that in the Effutu Traditional Area death is seen as a force that revitalises society's interrelationships, thus renewing society's vitality and strengthening community bonds. The powers of evil may have triumphed in bringing about death, but the triumph is only temporary since the often elaborate and protracted customary rites in connection with the dead emphasise the ephemeral power of evil. There is a paradoxical attitude to death, to be sure. Death is mourned and regretted, but the ceremonies aimed at stabilising the ebusua which have suffered loss are very striking.

The ebusua system which embraces every Effutu, (whether a Christian or non-Christian), makes death not a concern of one but of all. The members of the ebusua share

in the payment of the debt incurred through death.

Secondly, the ebusua system of the Effutus does away with "individualism" as found among the Western people. J. C. Carothers therefore remarks that Western culture with its insistence on an individual self-sufficiency which implies the constant need for personal choice and personal decision - the application of general principles to particular situations - is quite a recent thing and dates only from the "Protestant and later Industrial Revolution. It is far more strange in human history than are the African cultural modes, and carries many risks".⁶ With individualism, it could be argued that taking the Bible as a whole no where can one find mention of "Man" as an individual existing in and for himself, nor is attention focussed upon the individual's relation to God. They all lived in a community and for the community. The Effutu convert, therefore, can never trully say 'I am man' but only 'I am in man'; he exists not as an isolated unit but always in unity with others.

In the Effutu world-view, men are members one of another by virtue of the biological links of family and race, by virtue of their interdependence in society and culture, by virtue of history and nationality that bind them to a particular past and future. The Bible takes all these factors seriously, never dismissing them as incidental or irrelevant, because they are all strands of that web of relationship that makes them one and binds them in the bundle the living with their Lord.⁷ The Bible again

⁶ J. C. Carothers, The African Mind in Health and Diseases: A study in ethnopsychiatry, W.H.O. 1963, pp. 151-2.

⁷ See Taylor, op. cit. pp. 117-118.

recognizes also the ultimate dread and dereliction of isolation. This was the curse laid upon Cain, to be cut off from man's natural relationship with society, and it was more than he could bear.⁸ The punishment for the most heinous offences was that the individual, family or tribe should be cut off from among the people.⁹ Conversely the blessings that are promised to those who maintain a right relationship with God are always communal, a share in the Shalom, the peace of the People of God.¹⁰ For human destiny according to the Bible, is the destiny of a 'people'. The word (Hebrew 'am' and Greek 'laos') is central and it bears very close affinities to the Effutu understanding of 'men' as a family, with their continual reference back to the beginning to an original ancestor from whom had sprung the ebusua and to the great names of the lineage that followed after. 'Death is the concern of all.'¹¹ Everybody is involved when death occurs.

In Sundkler's words: "the great Biblical terms for the Church - the People of God, the body of Christ, the Household or family of God - find a vibrant sounding-board in the structure of African society patterns, particularly of the clan".¹² Here he is talking about ebusua.

⁸ See Genesis 4/11-14, John Skinner ICC on Genesis, pp. 108-9.

⁹ Gen. 17/14; Ex. 12/17, Lev. 18/29 etc; Ezek. 14/8; 1 Kg. 9/7, 14/14, cf. Ruth 4/10.

¹⁰ Gen. 10/2-3; Deut. 28/8, 9; Ps. 29/15, Gal. 6/16.

¹¹ Here a parallel could be drawn from the emphasis in post Vatican II Roman Catholic Theology on recovery of concept of "people of God" which refers to the total community ... See The Documents of Vatican II: with Notes and Comments by Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox Authorities, ed. by Walter M. Abbott, S. J. London, Anchor Press Ltd. 1966, p. 25.

¹² B. Sundkler, The Christian Ministry in African, London, 1960, pp. 297-8.

The individualism which has no place in the Effutu society makes the ebusua responsible for all the funeral rites in connection with death. It is the ebusua which call on the ancestors to re-inforce the ebusua by giving the women more children; there is also drumming and dancing - these and other activities underline the belief that death is not an unmitigated disaster. Research shows that the mutual recognition of roles by the ancestors, is very much appreciated by the bereaved, if the pastor and particularly the Church would allow the members of the ebusua to pay homage to their dead and engage in ritual acts which are demonstration of respect for the dead. To allow the ebusua to pay their last respects gives satisfaction to the ebusua for they feel that they have done their duty, have done a good deed for the dead person, and have buried him with honour as a member of their family and lineage.

Here it could be argued that if only the Church would permit it, the pastor could have a significant role to play. It could be said that his role would come to be seen as we might call a "ministry of attraction". In other words he would be seen as a minister identifying himself with his people. We know that Christ, the Word incarnate, was a citizen of a particular country, not a man without a country. He did not adopt a nihilistic attitude towards his people. He studied his national culture and religious traditions. He announced that he came not to abolish these traditions, but to fulfil them. His

people were under the political domination of Rome, and because of this inter alia, when he looked on the capital city, he wept. This was patriotism in that situation.

The very invitation, therefore, to the minister by the ebusua to the funeral to lead it and bless the dead is an indication, since they are Christians, that they want Christ to be present in their midst and the rite would not be regarded as complete without him. This faith in Christ is not, therefore, necessarily in conflict with what is performed by the ebusua in relation to the deceased - of course depending upon what is performed.

The third area of conflict, to which we have already referred, has to do with Witchcraft. It is true, according to research, that in Ghana in general and in the Effutu Traditional Area in particular, culture change produces, on the whole, conditions of economic distress, political unrest, and personal conflicts. No wonder, therefore, that the belief in witchcraft - the inimical spiritual agencies which bring about death - increases rather than abates.

Now the rational and logical ^{or} approach to witchcraft and the Effutu belief must be looked into by the Church since that belief is deeply rooted in the Effutu people. It has been suggested that because the Church fails to provide protection from this malice, people are looking elsewhere.

It is equally true that God provides a much better protection from fear. Even the non-Effutu Christian or convert knows "se wo sunsum ye dur a abayifo nntum nnhaw wo" - "If you have a strong character, the witches cannot harm you." But from where shall they draw this strength? Their

personalities are so tired and so exhausted from the stress of cultural conflict.

The New Testament regards witches as people possessed by demons.¹³ Belief in the power of the witches is deeply rooted in the Effutu people and even converts. Belief in witchcraft diverts man's mind from rethinking his attitude to his own tribal past, to women, education and money. Whether based on material fact or not, it is undeniably true that belief in witchcraft is an important factor in the contemporary Effutu convert's situation.

The danger of exorcisms as performed by the sects is that it may not be Christ who is working as is claimed but group hysteria and suggestion. A greater danger may be that it will not bring a real healing but only effect a temporary patching up of a split personality.

The task of the Church is not, therefore, to deny the power of the witch but to show that that power could be overcome in the power of Christ, to demonstrate the strength of its face-to-face fellowship and to offer a Gospel geared to African needs.¹⁴

Hopefully, with these concerns the Church would touch the Effutu converts not only in certain areas but in all areas of life, i.e. from birth to death. With constant

¹³ Magic, divination, sorcery and witchcraft are all connected with belief in supernatural powers, and are methods whereby men endeavour to obtain from these powers knowledge of the future, or assistance in the affairs of life. These powers could destroy lives. See Dictionary of the Bible, 2nd ed. rev. by Frederick C. Grant and H. H. Rowley, Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1963, p. 607.

¹⁴ cf. Noel Smith, The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, 1835-1960, Accra: Ghana University Press, 1966, p. 277.

Christian education that witchcraft is a bad thing, the Effutu Christian attitudes to witchcraft could be shaped by the Bible. This could make the Effutu Christian believe that membership of Christ and implicit belief in the power of God - whose power overcomes every power - could confer immunity from demonic powers of the witch. The result would be that belief in witchcraft which has been for the Effutu - both Christian and non-Christian - one of the main causes of death would no longer be feared but would be conquered, and peaceful death to join the fathers who are believed to be in the Onyankopon Fie, the 'so called the Palace of God', would be envisaged.

As indicated earlier, it is true that to a certain extent the Effutu clergymen have inherited a theological position which is often ill-conceived and indeed untenable, arising as it did from the circumstances of the implantation of the Church by the early missionaries who tended to work on the assumption that all conceivable theological situations had already been anticipated and solved by their home Churches.

This recalls a further area of tension the question of polygamy and the treatment given to a deceased polygamist by the Church. In one instance a Church refused to hold a funeral service in the Church for a deceased member on the grounds that he had been polygamous and yet at the grave-side one of the senior ministers present read his life story to the gathering and thanked God for his life.

Here it could be argued that the senior minister had no alternative to reading the deceased's biography and thanking God for his life. This is because: (1) when the polygamist was sick the minister would have visited him because the man was a member of the minister's Church, and his name might be in the Church's class book; and (2) the Church had had the polygamist in earlier days when the man was in good health, to be, as for instance, a chairman during some of the Church's activities, like the harvest thanksgiving. Here, one sees the impossible theological position in which the minister put himself by refusing to have the body of the deceased in the Church. It goes without saying that the senior minister in question, as noted earlier was following Church policy. But he was not aware that this policy entailed a distortion of what Christ stood for.¹⁵ Christ has no special love for a particular set of people but for all. He died to save the whole world but not a particular world.

As argued before there were two vulnerable aspects to the Church's position: it failed to understand fully and to provide for the social implications of its teaching; and it was open to criticism concerning the way its discipline operated.

The dilemma the Church is faced with is not an easy one: how to hold up a new standard before a whole community

¹⁵ It should be noted that in no way should polygamy be understood to be a sin. cf. Matthew 15:1-20, Mk. 7:15 and Acts 10:14.

and yet allow into the fellowship those who are not able at first to follow it? On the other hand is there nothing scandalous now in the practice of requiring a polygamist to divorce the mothers of his own children and to do this in the name of the Christian ideal of indissoluble marriage and stable family life? Indeed the Christian pilgrimage is hard enough in its essential demands. So moral theologians must heed the New Testament warning against binding heavy and oppressive burdens on the backs of man (cf. Matthew 23/4). It is therefore a fair question, which all teachers of the law must ask themselves continuously: Do we traverse land and sea with a liberating message that summons Christ's disciples from among the nations - and then make their last condition worse than the first?

As far as a natural law theory is concerned, the Effutu polygamist uses his wives not for sensual gratification, but for the procreation of children. With regard to custom, this is the common practice in Ghana. There is no legal prohibition. The law of the land sanctions polygamy. In practice, some congregations have elected as members of the Church council men and women who are polygamists. This means the gifts of leadership, Christian piety and zeal do not appear to be restricted to monogamists.

This policy is a vivid witness to the gracious God who meets men where they are and accepts them as they are, and then by His Spirit transforms their lives.

The Church therefore should reconsider its policy and know that the union of Christ and the Church can be signified through a polygamous marriage, even as the Old Testament occasionally used the image of polygamy to signify the union of God and his people. After all, Christ is one and the Church is a plurality. The writer therefore thinks it will be in the Christian tradition to give a Church burial to all who are baptized and have not openly denied membership of the society called the Church. This is consonant with the calling of the Church to be the incarnation and instrument of grace and mercy and selfless service to fellowmen. In any case the Christian ministry is not confined to regular churchgoers or even to the residual or peripheral Christians; it is also to the positive disbelievers, to the agnostic and to the atheist.

What has the Church to communicate in connection with death, personally and liturgically? The burden of the service both in Church and at the graveside is to pray eternal rest for the deceased through Christ and to affirm that death does not and cannot separate from the love of Christ. Of course, to have eternal rest presupposes God is forgiving sinner, which is the description of every man, pope, clergyman, layman, criminal. Isaac Watts rightly said of the "saints above":

"Once they were mourning here below,
Their couch was wet with tears;
They wrestled hard, as we do now
With sins and doubts and fears".¹⁶

¹⁶ See The Methodist Hymn Book, Hymn No. 831, The Methodist Publishing House, London. 1954; see also Isaac Watts, 'Give me the wings of faith to rise', Hymns Ancient and Modern, Revised, 1950, No. 571, verse 2.

The message of the Church service is twofold: prayer for forgiveness of sins from loving Father and therefore for eternal rest. This message is found in all the denominations whether Protestant, Roman Catholic or Sectarian and is well summed up in an Antiphon and a prayer from the Roman Catholic order for the Burial of the Dead.¹⁷

The conclusion from consideration of the aforementioned areas of tension i.e. death, individualism, witchcraft, and polygamy, is inevitable. The Western theological training whether carried out by Western missionaries or by Africans trained in Western theological Colleges, has produced ministers whose theology is not always relevant to their circumstances and who often seem unwilling to recognise or indeed incapable of recognising the irrelevance of the received theology. Words of Dr. Kenneth Kirk help to answer one of the African Church's greatest problems:

"The Church must always and everywhere set before men the highest ... conduct, the truest forms of worship and creed. But she must be very slow indeed to enforce them even by the threat of confining her members to those who acquiesce. The Shepherd's staff and not the tyrant's sword must be her true weapon. The whole flock is to be led

¹⁷ The Antiphon runs 'if thou Lord, will keep record of our iniquities, who has strength to bear it?' See The Small Missal, Burns and Oates, London, 1959, p. 437. The prayer also runs 'Lord, we pray thee to release the soul of thy servant, from every bond of sin, so that he may come to life in the glory of the resurrection and breathe the air of paradise among thy saints and elect, through Christ our Lord, Amen.' Ibid, p. 440.

into the fold, not the few harried into it whilst the many are left to their fate."¹⁸

The sum and substance of the Effutu criticism of the Church, in fact and by implication, amounts to an indictment. As the Christian faith is seen from without, it has failed to uphold Effutu institutions and provide a medium for Effutu aspirations and theological values; and as seen from within the Church is an alien institution not yet rooted in Effutu Traditional life and failing to meet Effutu's spiritual needs. In substance the opinions of the two types of criticism converge, and the point of their meeting is the message of the Christian faith to the Effutu people. For if at the level of the Effutu's experience of his world it had proved possible to apply the Christian faith without recourse to European world view, redeeming the Effutu 'soul' at the centre, then change would have taken place over the whole of Effutu life, affecting his world view, his traditional religious practices and beliefs regarding death and the dead, inter alia, and his institutions from within and not as an intrusion from without. The Church would have developed as an Effutu institution, rooted in the soil, expressing Effutu-Akan cultural values and aspirations.

The conclusion is that the Christian faith as historically implanted by western-missionary enterprise among the Effutu people has proved unable to sympathize with or relate its message spiritually to the Effutu

¹⁸ K. E. Kirk, The Vision of God, 2nd ed. London, Longmans, 1932, p. 469.

spiritual outlook. Its impact is thereby dulled. With regard to the specific question of death and the dead, it has launched a frontal attack on Effutu traditional beliefs and practices and sought to emancipate the Effutu from his traditional outlook.

Here we must not abandon every hope of investigating the unavoidable conflicts between the Gospel and some of the traditional Effutu beliefs and practices. This will be seen later. At the same time it should be noted that every society not excluding Western European societies, can be described as pathological or disintegrated from certain points of view; for where is the society to be found in which crime is unknown, in which conflicts leading often to war or fratricide never occur, in which every institution functions with complete smoothness and inevitability?

As compared with the areas of tension previously discussed, in the Effutu-situation there are two or three legitimate and clear examples of inevitable conflict between the Gospel and some of the Effutu beliefs and practices which could be given.

Research indicates that it was a common practice among the Effutu people to sacrifice human beings to escort a dead chief to his grave. It was the custom that relations and in case of a chief, his subjects cut off their hair and mourned for six days and nights on the tomb. Again it was the common practice among the Effutus to seek help from stones, trees, rivers etc. which as lesser gods, were believed to have certain powers. All these practices have been abandoned by the

Christian Effutu who confesses the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and hope for the future resurrection of the dead who are usually known as the ancestors. It is not admissible for one to forget that European missionaries constitute everywhere the main drive in this eradication of these customs; that they were the determining factors as regards the initiative of the annihilation of these customs which were in conflict with the Gospel message: "Do not kill" and also that Christ is the Lord - whose Lordship does away with every fear and superstition.

Credit therefore is to be given where credit is due - to the European missionaries, but to a large extent the method and means adopted to secure this end - emancipation - relying as they did on Western enlightenment as set forth through a westernized form of Christianity, had the effect of calling the Effutu out of his traditional environment, not of redeeming him within it.¹⁹

The Christ preached by the missionaries was a particular Christ with whom many could not easily identify, and who did not speak in relevant enough terms to the many who joined the Church. He was understood in a particular way by the missionaries, and this understanding

¹⁹ There are many elements in African traditional religious-cultural beliefs and practices as will be seen later which can be developed within Christianity and even make contributions to Christianity. This means that there is a value in the examination, as for instance, of the question of ancestor veneration with reference to the pastoral practice of the Church. The African Churches are pilgrim Churches, constantly travelling towards the horizon of truth. They are changing, self-renewing, not static, and are being enriched by contributions of other cultures that are successively Christianized. See Aylward Shorter, "African Traditional Religion: Its Relevance in the Contemporary World", Cross Currents, XXVIII, 4, 1979, p. 426.

was thought by them to apply universally.²⁰ Hence the Church's theology, such as it was, was unsuited to the circumstances of the Effutu people. There are missionary records to the effect that there was once an intention to bring Christ closer to the people in and through the life and thought, but such statements were more easily made than acted upon. For example, there was the expressed desire to raise a local ministry, but in practice this meant a ministry modelled strictly on the European pattern. The end result was a Christian faith which separated the sacred from the secular, the natural from supernatural, for a people in whose world they were undifferentiated.

The question now arises: Can Christian teaching regarding death and the dead be so presented as to make Christ more real in and through Effutu life and thought, for example, through the tradition of spirit-consciousness which pervades Africa? Unless one follows E. Troeltsch who maintained that one could not encounter Christ unless one is a member of the Western world,²¹ Christian Africans could not develop African Christian theology out of some elements in African traditional religio-cultural beliefs and practices of death and the dead. The concept of "African theology is meant to express the need to do more drastic re-thinking of all that the Church is and stands for with a view to creating a more appropriate Christian instrument, one that would serve more directly and more

²⁰ See also, Dickson, op. cit. p. 37.

²¹ Richard Niebuhr, Christ and Culture, New York: Harper Torchholds, 1951, p. 30.

effectively the spiritual aspirations of those in Africa who call upon the name of Christ".²²

It is true that Christianity is still basically a Western religion. Men and women in Africa today are yearning for a new breakthrough. This breakthrough and the development of African theology might be realized if Africans could follow what we may call the "3-Self Movement". The term 3-self means that the ^{ul}Churches that grew from the preaching of the Gospel by the missionaries should become self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating. The Holy Spirit acting through history is making the Church in the Effutu Traditional Area ask itself a question: a question about the nature of the Effutu Church. How is the Church to break away from a place it is unwilling to be in and enter a new life? How is the Church to change, to redirect and renew itself, to establish itself as the body of Christ, to make the Church not only a Church in man's minds, but primarily a Church according to the mind of Christ and which could be understood by the Africans and perhaps by some non-Africans as well? (Here we should note that it is true that in the relationship of the Western Europeans to the African theologians there is still at work unconsciously the relationship between motherland and colonial land, mother church and daughter church. It would really, therefore, be more meaningful to work in concert at a new construction

²² See Dickson, op. cit. p. 40, cf. Kofi Appiah-Kubi and Sergio Torres op. cit. pp. 59-65.

of theology rather than in a rivalry to try to pass each other by on the 'left' or the 'right' or in the 'middle').

A common and concise solution which Effutu/Akan Christian converts could accept and support in order to avoid any rivalry is to follow the three-self Road. The first two aims of the three-self Road have been achieved, for today all the denominational Churches are autonomous and self supporting. But what now remains is the last goal (self-propagating) which calls for an authentic theological base, such as is directed by the expression African theology. This means that: For the Christian Church finally and fully to realise its catholicity²³ Christians in Africa should proceed in their own way. Let us therefore look at certain specific matters with a view to discussing how best Africa out of its religio-cultural beliefs and practices can contribute to Christian theology concerning death. The matters concerned are:

²³ Though we talk about catholicity, universality, or internationality between Western and African Churches, we should not ignore all important differences involved. Because of this, though African Churches affirm the universality of the Church and are consequently developing certain intermedial contacts, they should not place this above everything else. This is because it is very clear that individuality and catholicity, particularity and universality, are not contradictory, or mutually exclusive, but are complementary to each other. The more fully a church in a particular country actualizes its particularity, the richer the diversity of the whole church and the more substance its universality. If the church in a particular country cannot even attain its independence, then talk about interdependence with other churches is largely empty words. It could therefore be said that in order to avoid and protect the African Church and to keep it free from an excessive pounding from abroad even if this is a pounding of love, Africans' international contacts cannot but be limited and selective. The international contacts which the African Church entertains must be in accord with their three-self principle, or at least not detrimental to it.

1. Indigenization; 2. The Church's orders of Service;
3. The study of the Bible; 4. The restatement of basic
Christian doctrines regarding death and the dead.

1. Indigenization:- There comes a time when the people who have received the Gospel must take forward this task of evangelism and nurture and actually seek to express the new life in Christ in such a way that others can comprehend them. This does not mean that the Gospel will become synonymous with the local culture; the Gospel must itself judge the culture. But unless the life of Christ finds expression in local cultural terms the task of evangelism and nurture cannot go forward. Christianity and its world-wide scope is to a great extent connected with the colonial expansion of capitalism, and thus it has congenital deficiencies and weakness. But we can also say that when Christianity is no longer a 'foreign thing' in the minds of the people, it has become local.²⁴ The term indigenization therefore is held to involve making a distinct separation between the central revelation of God in Christ, which revelation is unchanging and about which there can be no compromise, and the cultural incidentals of a Western type which accompanied the Gospel to Africa. The latter must be either discarded or adapted to suit the African traditional cultural ethos. God's

²⁴ See A New Look at Christianity in Africa, Geneva: W.S.C.F., p. 6.

revelation is addressed to all people.

Furthermore true indigenization involves understanding African history and discerning how God's hand is moving through it. It is true that the African continent has gone through several traumatic experiences. Whether African's speak of people or of countries, every time Africans have been in contact with people from other continents, the Africans have been the losers. Thus the underdevelopment of Africa developed Europe, and the slave trade benefited slave owners in the Americas. What is extraordinary is that suffering has produced endurance and in the most crucial times African Christians can still believe that God visited the downtrodden African people.

Africa and Africans can be said to have a part in God's redemptive plans as found in the biblical witness. In the life of Jesus there are two remarkable incidents worth remembering. When still a baby Jesus came to Egypt as a refugee (Matthew 2/3-15); Africans were again honoured, on the way to Golgotha, when Simon became the only man to help Jesus carry his cross (Matthew 27/32). The planting of the Church in the Acts of Apostles did not exclude Africa. An Ethiopian travelling from Jerusalem to Gaza met Philip and was baptized (Acts 8/26-39). Throughout Church history the contribution of theologians from North Africa has been outstanding. In modern times, in spite of the Africans' material poverty, Africa and people of African descent show encouraging promises for the development of an

authentic African theology and especially a theology regarding death and the dead.

Now the crucial question is: how then does one go about assisting the Church to take on a more local character?

It could be suggested that indigenizing the forms of Church life is the simplest - and also the most superficial-way. Some people think that a church in Africa is indigenized when drums accompany the singing especially during a funeral celebration. While indigenization of form is of course necessary, it does not really deal with the problem. There must be a new look at the content. Every culture has its own particular way of thinking and its own assumptions. This means that in each culture people will have certain questions which to them seem very important. For instance, if those, with whom one is sharing the Gospel, are like the Effutu people seeking for answers about death and the dead, sickness, calamity, and witchcraft, then perhaps one should address oneself to those concerns more than, let us say, to the authority of the scriptures, which may never have been an issue for them. Some people too often assume that what is important to them is important to other people of another culture.

It is undeniably true that the Word is unchanging indeed. This is not to say that the Spirit through the Word does not reach a man right where he is in his cultural milieu.

It could therefore be argued that the problem is not that the missionaries have been guilty of giving the wrong answers to questions. It is that the missionaries have not been adept at hearing the questions burning in the hearts of the Africans and at going to the scriptures afresh for answers. The missionaries too often give good answers to questions which people like the Effutus never raise, and fall silent when their authentic questions emerge, such as questions about witchcraft which to the Effutus is the main cause of death and also questions about death.

The beauty of the Gospel is that it meets people where they are, in their changing circumstances, and takes them on from there. The independence movement within the Effutu Churches does indicate, however, that the traditional Churches have far too long been culture-denying, and that they must now take more seriously the prevailing cultural orientation of the Effutu/Akan people especially about death and the dead. This is very important because the Effutu Traditional Area is an area in which the assertion of things African has a high value.

Here it is important to say that when we speak of the indigenization of the Church, we are not speaking of syncretism in which our Lord Jesus shares the throne with another. Nor are we speaking of the relative nature of truth. We simply mean that the people of every culture on the face of the earth should be encouraged to invite Jesus into their midst, and to find him so profoundly

meaningful just where they are that they seek his mind more and more for daily perplexities and joys of living, that their faith in Jesus Christ becomes so great that they hold to him as Lord of life no matter what storms may come, and no matter how rapid and disconcerting is the change in society.

After all said and done, there is a scope and limitation of indigenization. For we are tempted to think that we need a cultural revival in the Church. In many ways this is true. But what is really needed is a spiritual revival, so that we are assured of the Holy Spirit's leading through the cultural jungles. If we try to solve these cultural problems without an accompanying new work of regeneration and holiness, we can expect nothing more than a resurgence of pride. But under the leading of the Spirit, we can be assured that every "people" will be enabled to bring their "peculiar treasure" to the Lord of all.

Through indigenization, we can see that to the Effutu converts, death is not only part of life. Death as they understand it, in terms of Christ's death for instance, is seen to rekindle the community's togetherness.²⁵ They also understand death to be a gateway to the kingdom of God, where all ancestors go. Here we see the expression of the Effutu Selfhood.

²⁵ See Supra, pp. 227-230.

By indigenization therefore, Christian theology should be "a reflection seeking a responsible reception and rooting of the Christian gospel in a given concrete locality. Fundamental to its discussion is the historical process of the Christian proclamation in the various cultural, religious, economic and ideological contexts of humanity."²⁶

Secondly, there is an urgent need for reconsideration of the Church's Orders of Service. For instance, a British Methodist on a visit to the Effutu Traditional Area, and worshipping in a Methodist Church would not see any difference between British and Ghanaian worship. The British would find the forms of worship familiar. He would sing the same hymns during funeral service and pray the same prayers for the dead. By the use of familiar liturgical formulations, it could be argued that this situation is one which underlines the oneness of the Church of Christ and anything different would destroy the unity. At the same time it is a fact, and demonstrable, that not all the Church's Orders of Services are meaningful to the Effutu Christian. The Effutu convert sings a hymn about snow during Christmas without himself knowing what snow is. He sings "Now the labourer's task is o'er ..." whereas by definition of role there is a continuing concern as of duty on the

²⁶ See Richardson and Bowden, op. cit. p. 291.

part of the dead in the affairs of the living. Here it could be argued, from the point of view of the Effutu religio-cultural beliefs and practices, that the future life is not only realized by the name of the living person given to the child, in order for the person to be remembered when he is dead. But also that in the future life where God still reigns, the ancestors still have a duty to perform in their ebusua, guided by the spirit of God. The ancestors are not static. The ancestors have a great concern for the living and vice versa.

Furthermore, the Effutu convert believes that the incarnation of God not only shows God's great love by entering the world, experiencing human misery, and completing his work of salvation by dying on the cross. At the same time he also believes that, it tells something of how he should regard the body and material things. Because they are channels by which God enters into the world a body and material things are not to be despised. He also believes that God's love and concern for man is all-embracing. Bodily and material life inter alia, are all included within the realm of God's love and concern.

It therefore could be argued from the point of view of the Effutu cultural values that the phrases read during committal: "ashes to ashes, dust to dust, earth to earth" seem to project the idea of total denial of embodied existence after death - something Effutu people vehemently do not believe as earlier indicated in Chapter 3. Again to an ordinary Effutu convert the

phrases could also mean 'no life after death'. To crown it all the phrases have no cultural impact. An ordinary Effutu convert expects more cultural understanding; and the phrases represent an unreal world to the Effutu convert to whom immortality of the soul has no meaning apart from a body.²⁷

It is true that the committal phrases in question have gained much support. This is because of the Genesis' story of Creation. Man was created out of the earth and to that earth he should go. But today the two accounts are no longer properly understood as science or history.

From his traditional point of view the Effutu/Akan convert would believe rather that the body when buried undergoes a 'transformation process'. This transformation is entirely in God's hand. The body does not turn into ashes ... etc. In other words, to the Effutu Christian death does not bring an end to existence. What is down there does not undergo corruption or annihilation. In pouring of libation the member of the ebusua is brought back to join the family. This points to community and continuity of the ebusua in 'life'.

It is within this context that mention of resurrection in the Christian sense of the word should be made.

Again, in the Methodist order of service during the committal the minister reads: '. . . His great mercy to

²⁷ See Chapters 3 and 4.

take unto Himself the soul . . .'. But the Effutu convert does not believe that the soul (Okra) which is the divine part in man's constitution, without which both the mbogya of the mother and the sunsum of the father would not have been possible, goes to God disembodied. The Effutu convert believes that it is rather the embodied-existent - soul - the very embodied person who is dead, though not physically the same body, that goes to God. The 'soul' language used with no qualification such as 'embodied' - portrays a sense of release from a body, which is very Greek. This the Effutu/Akan convert cannot understand.

In order therefore to make the committal more meaningful to an ordinary Effutu convert the following reconsideration and contribution could be made. It would be better ^to read: "For as much as it hath pleased Almighty God of His great mercy to take unto Himself the person or the 'embodied-soul' of our dear . . . we (also) commit his 'body' to the hands of the Almighty God . . .". This simple alteration would convey something which any Effutu/Akan grass root believer could understand.

There is another desirable liturgical reconsideration. This concerns the black stoles and vestments which have disappeared during burial of the dead. For instance, some Methodist and Anglican Ministers take the opportunity of celebrating the liturgy of resurrection for they insist that those who die rise with Christ. They therefore wear white stoles and vestments respectively

to symbolize resurrection. Theologically, this is justified. At the same time there are some who wear purple. There is a problem here. The problem being whether this helps the parishioners at all? Without doubt, the Church allows the ministers to use any of the three colours. The point here is whether they ever reflect on and consider the sentiments of the parishioners. Perhaps the ministers suffer from the modern sickness, fear of death. The resurrection liturgy instantaneously transports us to glory without fully experiencing death. Why should there be a glossing over the fact of death? This does not mean that they should wear black always. There is dress for mourning and dress for rejoicing.

Here it could be argued that faith is not and can never be a substitute for psychological processes through which a human being has to go in an experience of death. Western technological culture has had a subtle and dangerous influence on Christian faith.

Here African Traditional religionists have something to contribute to contemporary Western Christians with reference to burial service. The African religionists and the African Christian convert out of their religio-cultural experience know that death comes before resurrection. This is an experience for every ebusua, brought about through the death of one of its members. A period of mourning should be allowed, they have right to it, to go through the process of death. It is good for the Church to explain to the Effutu/Akan

parishioners the process through which they are going. This is the process of death with Christ in order to rise with him. They go with him through it psychologically and spiritually in faith. They are therefore able to say with Christ: "Father, . . . nevertheless not my will, but thine be done". (Luke 22/42). These are precious moments. People are not to be deprived of this genuine experience, the moments during which they join Christ in his suffering and death. The tendency, therefore, to present or conduct a cosmetic celebration of death is very unhealthy.

With the above appeal for reconsideration and contribution, we see that the Church's orders of service, often fails to leading people to the heart of worship - communion with God - because they ignore those gathered in worship, taking little or no account of their being who they are. The quest for an African theology must involve a close study of received Orders of Service, particularly those in connection with death and the dead, in the light of cognate traditional liturgical situations with a view to arriving at formulations which make Christ, real to the Effutu people in their own particular circumstances, as the contribution above theologically implies.

The third area which has been neglected by the Church in the Effutu Traditional Area and which deserves urgent attention is the study of The Bible. It is worth saying that the many hermeneutical tools which scholars have acquired over the years are indispensable, and that theological students should be brought up to

appreciate the modern critical methods of biblical study. Unfortunately little attempt has been made to relate the Bible to the students' circumstances. It is therefore, not without justification that T. A. Beetham makes the following observation:

"The curriculum (of African theological colleges) is in most cases too much tied to a traditional Western pattern. Students can still come away from their lecture-room after studying the first two chapters of Mark's Gospel - with its account of the touch of Jesus of Nazareth on different kinds of illness, including mental sickness - without having come to grips either with the failure of their Church, despite its hospitals and clinics, to exercise a full ministry of healing or with the success of some independent Churches in this respect."²⁸

What Beetham is implying is that any viable theology must and should have a basis and that a thorough study of the Bible should involve finding the word of God for the inquirer in the context of his own circumstances. It is not surprising that recently some African theologians who belong to the West African Association of Theological Institutions have been indicating some emerging trends such as African Bible commentary that would, while employing modern critical methods of study, at the same time help Africans to hear God speaking to them direct. Such a very 'contemporary' work as the 'Acts of the Apostles', which foreshadows the discussions going on today on Christianity in Africa^{*}, has yet to catch the eye of a commentator who would make the questionings of Acts 15 and the reasoning of Acts 17, and the thoughts of many

²⁸ Beetham, op. cit. p. 100; 107.

other passages in that book come home to Africans with all alacrity and immediacy.²⁹

Again let us consider the following text: "I am the light of the World; anyone who follows me will not be walking in the dark; he will have the light of life", (John 8/12). It is here that the African with his religio-cultural values can make a contribution. The bright lantern which is placed next to the body of a deceased person as well as the light which is held to lead the widow to the sea have to be understood in terms of life. These lights can symbolize the power of Christ, the power which protects the body and the widow from evil spirits and storms.

This means that the teaching of the Bible must be relevant to the people's environment. It must, on the other hand, be grounded in the Bible itself. The teaching must be related to the actual situation. The theology of the West should not be transplanted wholesale to the Africans. The Christian faith should be presented in relation to the totality of questions raised by the local situation and it should not be assumed that certain questions are relevant to all times and situations. In the final analysis, the Word has to assume African flesh and plunge into the agony and conflict of the mission of salvation in Africa.

²⁹ See Kofi Appiah-Kubi and Sergio Torres, *op. cit.* pp. 83-90; Dickson, *op. cit.* p. 42.

The fourth area of concern is the need to re-examine Christian doctrines, with particular reference to the Effutu traditional beliefs and practices of the dead. In fact in this connection a more fundamental question needs to be asked. Should the re-thinking of Christian beliefs assume the inviolability of the traditional categories of theological thought? In other words, would it be safe from profaning what traditionally is held to be theologically correct, if Christian religion could give a second thought to some African beliefs which hitherto were not considered. As Jürgen Moltmann puts it: "African theology confronted us with something really new, for the African modes of thought have been entirely unfamiliar to us ever since Aristotle."³⁰ Here Western activists are forced again and again to fundamental reorientations of their interest and thought forms. Furthermore one could argue in terms of criterion, the criterion being whether that particular African belief when judged by the Gospel would not be a hindrance to the people's faith in Jesus Christ. For instance, Christianity by tradition categorises the human being into body, soul and spirit. Would it be wrong for Christianity to rethink and accept the Effutus' argument and contribution - that there is no separation between the ^a sacred and the secular in communal life, neither is there a separation between the soul and the body in a person? Effutus

³⁰ Jürgen Moltmann, "On Latin American Liberation Theology. An Open Letter to Jose Miguez Bonino" in Christianity and Crisis, XXXVI, No. 5, 1976, p. 57.

believe that spiritual needs are as important for the body as bodily needs are for the soul. That is basic to African medicine and psychiatry. Moreover, for a wholesome life people not only have to be at peace with themselves, but also must be fully intergrated into the community. The reconsideration of Christian religion and accepting the Effutus' contribution, based on their traditional beliefs, could be of assistance in purging the Christian beliefs and their traditional categorisation. We are not to forget that man is a communal being. He belongs to God and to the Community.

The second area which Christian beliefs need to rethink is about the role of ancestors in the life of the Effutus. The ancestral role becomes important in enabling the Effutus to remember their source and history. To deny history is to deny one's roots and source of self-identity. It is also to deny the fact that we embody in ourselves both past and the future. The ancestral cults serve the purpose of keeping people from becoming rootless and purposeless, blown about by every fickle fashion and ideology. "The ancestral cults have been the custodian of the African Spirit and personality and of a vivid sense of community demonstrated in socio-religious festivals."³¹ This applies very much to the Effutu people.

³¹ See Kofi Appiah-Kubi and Sergio Torres, op. cit. p. 111.

However, as argued earlier, some missionaries seem to be unaware of the Africans' need for communion with the dead. Continuity and communion play a very important part in the life of Africans. The missionaries see the veneration of ancestors as evil (interpreting it as worship). This is precisely what the Effutu converts do not intend. The Effutus love their ancestors. The Effutu converts believe that ancestors are with God. It appears that the missionaries are blind to a lot of elements involved in African traditional religion, Effutu not excepted.

The intriguing question which needs mention concerns slaughtering for the ancestors during Akomase festival (i.e. remembrance day for the dead) by the Effutus and sacrificing to the idols as discussed by Paul in his Epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 10/18-22). As indicated earlier, the sheep slaughtered by the Effutus is shared among the ebusua - an act which is designed to unite the people to God in a holy fellowship. In Paul's case, the converts are being asked to flee from sacrificing to idols. Paul maintains that the Lord's cup of blessing which in turn is blessed by men, effects fellowship with Christ's blood and the bread which they break with his body. Partaking of the one bread, the many communicants become one. A Christian therefore cannot partake of the Lord's cup and of that of demons. There is a big distinction, however, between the two. Paul is in one world inundated by idols and the Effutus in another of ancestors. Here we see two distinct categories of thought which should not be confused.

As said earlier, the ancestors have some power over the living. But the fact is that all powers visible and invisible are under Christ. In Matthew 27/45-54 we read about the power of Christ in relation to the dead. The dead rose from their tombs which opened at the moment of death of Christ. These entered the Holy City and appeared to people. This text describes an impressive phenomenon in lives of those who witnessed the death of Christ. The hearers of this word in the context of ancestorship might come to see that communion that exists between Christ and the dead, and that the ancestors rise and live through Christ - the Greatest of all ancestors. All those in communion with Christ can only do good, and those not in communion with him are prevented by him from doing any harm. "God made this world of ours and we believe that our ancestors help to build up the community with us", says McGrath in "Africa Our Way of Love".³² Christ is the bond of life and strengthens this bond in ebusua. Not only should one member be recognized for his power, success, and for the fact that he sired daughters and sons - for being a biological creator of the ebusua, but also those who are in Christ and provide inspiration through their life of virtue.

³² M. McGrath and N. Gregorrie, Africa Our Way of Love Marriage, London: G. Chapman, 1977, p. 60.

Veneration of good men tallies with Christian tradition. It could be said that virtue should count, and that biological procreation should not be the only element that determines whether one becomes an ancestor or not. The Universal Church honours men and women of outstanding virtue who lived heroic lives for the sake of the kingdom. The Church³³ encourages the veneration of such people for they become an inspiration to the living and intercede for the Church before God.

It was this practice of intercessory prayer to the Saints that the Reformers fiercely attacked. They argued that there was no warrant in the gospels: and that every prayer should be made in the name of Jesus, as indeed it was only through Jesus Christ the Lord, that Christians had access to God at all. They further maintained that it was only Christ pleading in heaven His Passion, offering His blood on behalf of men that had saved men. Christ's glorified humanity was the eternal pledge of the absolute efficacy of His accomplished work.³⁴

³³ For instance the Anglican Church, the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church. For the Methodist, the dead are remembered and praised during the watchnight service, - the 31st December every year. Through impromptu prayers, they are asked to care for the Church as they did when alive.

³⁴ See Chapter 5.

The Reformers were right to ventilate their feelings about the intercessory prayer ^{to} of the saints. But at the same time it could be argued from the point of view of the term 'communion of saints', that in this Christians are in fellowship with all their companions in the faith of Christ crucified. This is especially real to Christians in Holy Communion, when "with Angels and Archangels, and all the company of heaven,³⁵ Christian laud and magnify God's holy name". Christians present before their heavenly father the sacrifice which His only-begotten Son accomplished for their redemption, so that they may be filled with His grace and heavenly benediction. In performing this action, Christians are united with the whole company of the saints, who like the Christians are made one body with Christ that He may dwell in them and they in Him. Here, death, for those who live by such a faith, is no barrier to fellowship in Christ with those whom they have loved in Him.

According to the 'Oxford Dictionary' the word fellowship means companionship. It could be argued, therefore, that just as Christians continue to pray for those they love when they have died, so those in the nearer presence of God could hold before God the Christians' needs and concerns in intercessory prayer in the name of Jesus Christ.

³⁵ Methodist Order of Service, op. cit. p. 19.

The same criterion should be applied also by the ebusua which believes in Christ. Virtue should be the first thing considered; the good life of a person when he was still living. Their virtuous lives, the way they strived to serve God and man, their whole way of striving to live a good life within the ebusua context and the society, should serve as a yard-stick for the living members of the ebusua and the society that they are now with God. This implies that those who do not live a good life cannot really be venerated. This does not necessarily mean that they are in hell either. This should be left to God. The responsibility of the living is to intercede for the dead. God can do as he pleases with our prayers.

An interest should be to enliven and increase hope in the growth and permanence, in death, of the love which exists in the ebusua and continues in the bosom of Christ in the communion of the living and the living-dead.

"... their memory can be cherished as an ethical ideal, and people imitate them consciously and call upon them to be their guardians and models. In general, the relationship with living-dead is one of love rather of fear".³⁶

Thirdly, Christianity by tradition also teaches that God is the Creator of all humanity, and, as a

³⁶ Shorter, op. cit. p. 60.

corollary, that there is one human family. This may need rethinking. It is here that the African with his religio-cultural value, can contribute. The movement from nationalism towards universalism will be promoted by making available to the world the Effutus' vision of the unity of the individual person and humanity. Death has a hermeneutical function for man (i.e. death has a meaning for man). But no one experiences his own death: the death of parents, of a friend, of wife or husband, sister or brother, and so on. But in the death of others Effutus encounter something of themselves and they become aware of their own fate, the fact that they themselves must die. That is why another's death can move them so deeply and affect them existentially. In another's death they become aware what their own life is - existence as given, outside their control. In the other's death their life is given anew. In death something happens vicariously for them. No one dies only for himself, but always for others too. This is what Africans experience in a death of a kinsman. He does not die alone, but all are affected by his death and so they die with him. This African contribution can enable us to utilize creatively the tension between the universal and the particular. What the Effutu converts are saying is that God the Father loves all and wills all people good irrespective of such accidental differences as race, nationality, intelligence or social status. God bestows His grace and bounty upon all irrespective of their

merit or their gratitude. He sends the rain on the unjust as well as the just and causes the sun to shine upon the evil as upon the good. He freely offers forgiveness to all who will put their trust in Him and forgive their fellows. Indeed, His love is like that of a father who goes out to meet his prodigal son and kills a fatted calf to celebrate his return home (Luke 15:11-24). This is the kind of love which God bestows upon the unworthy. This is the goodness with which God is good. He is utter grace and steadfast love. Hence man can trust Him to supply his deepest needs; and for this reason, too, those who are aware of the grace and love of God out of gratitude seek to do their Father's will. Because God is self-giving they will seek to be self-giving, too. Because He loves all men, not because all men are lovable or intrinsically valuable apart from God, they seek to love all men too.

This 'I-thou' relationship between God and man and between man and neighbour is what the Effutu Christians in their experience of a kinsman's death want to project in order to develop a theology of humankind.

The fourth area of Christian belief which needs re-thinking in the light of the Effutu experience concerns soteriology. During the past hundred years there has been a vast increase in the number of attempts by the Western Christian theologians to set forth aspects of and interpretations of the death of Christ, not only through theological treatises but also through hymns,

sermons, passion-music, oratorios, novels as well. There has been little diminution in the recomposition of the central place which the cross occupies in the New Testament and which must therefore be retained in Christian thought and experience.

In the history of Christian thought there have been, as for instance according to Aulen,³⁷ three main ways of thinking of the Atonement. They are the following:

1. Man is regarded as enslaved by sin, death, and the devil, all of which are regarded as objective powers. God in Christ accomplishes the work of defeating these powers. Aulen calls this view the 'classical view' and insists that the crucial idea here is that God himself is the chief actor in the drama and that the reconciliation does not take place from man's side. Aulen thinks this view was characteristic of the early Greek Fathers, Paul and Luther.³⁸
2. The disobedience of man is regarded as nothing less than an affront to the infinite majesty or honour of God. Such an affront requires an infinite satisfaction. But since no creature can offer such a satisfaction, God himself must offer it, although in the form of a man, since it is on behalf of man. God becomes man in order

³⁷ Gustaf Aulen, Christus Victor: An historical study of the three main types of the idea of the Atonement, London, SPCK, 1978, pp. 4-7.

³⁸ Ibid. pp. 36-61, 101-109.

to satisfy his own offended honour. This view is closely identified with the thought of St. Anselm.³⁹

3. The basic problem of man is how he can be freed from the fear of God and respond personally to God's love. This is made possible, this view argues, by the embodiment of God's sacrificial love in the life and passion of Christ, an event which grasps the imagination and moves the heart in a way no transaction or doctrine can do. This theory is often identified with Abelard.⁴⁰

Beside these Western Christian traditional theories of atonement, there has been a growing recognition that no single interpretation of atonement can be regarded as definitive or all-embracing.

They are all culturally conditioned. There are therefore many facets to cultural experience, and if at-one-ment is designed to affect the total life of mankind, all must be in some way open to inclusion. The inclusion could then take account of Effutu understanding which throw new light on the significance of the death of Christ.

In the Effutu situation Christ's death would mean first and foremost the forgiveness of sins, the liberation of all humankind and the strengthening of the bonds binding together, not just of Christians, but of all peoples.

³⁹ Ibid. pp. 1-7. See also St. Anselm, Cur Deus Homo 2nd Ed. trans by S. N. Deane, LA Salle: Open Court Publishing Co., 1964.

⁴⁰ Aulen op. cit. pp. 97-98.

For instance unlike the celebration of Easter, the Local Council of Churches in the Effutu Traditional Area so arranges things that during the celebration of Good Friday all the Christian Churches, be they indigenous or Orthodox, come together as one body, for the only time in the year. They parade through the principal streets of the village, towns and cities, with hymns and lyrics (ebibirndwom). This is Christian oneness and solidarity. This is what African theology would seem to imply on the basis of African society's interrelationship and revitalization.

Furthermore, traditional killing of a beast condemned by the Church emphasizes, symbolically, the link which exists between death and life. Life comes from death and there is no life without intervening death. The Effutu converts could perceive this in the mystery of Christ. Here one could argue that the missionaries did not attempt to bring the Effutu/Akan beyond their conception of the principle renewal of life. For example, in the Effutu traditional funeral ceremonies, there is always an appointed time for reconciliation. This in fact is before the final funeral rites. Broken relations are never left unhealed. There is a ritual killing of a sheep and communal meals are held to restore harmony. Here life is merely renewed and regenerated.

But with African theology, one could argue that the restoration of harmony or the renewal of life could be conceived in terms of resurrection (as theologically

* understood in the mystery of Christ). This would mean that the peace and tranquility which has come in the ebusua through the killing of the beast is an elevation through transformation and glorification of Christ. This in fact is life beyond this life affected by intervention of God in the life of Christ.

In the African situation, as it is also in Christianity, whenever human or animal's life is taken, when it is given to God, it is made ^{sac} ~~as~~ sacred and normality is ^{for} ~~resorted~~ ^{resorted}. This belief is very well expressed and embodied in the Christian doctrine of atonement.

* With the African idea of sacrificial killing, it will enable African religion to make another contribution to African theology which by no means violates Christian traditional theological thought and the religious development of humankind. Here by close examination of theological elements of Christianity and African religion, one can indicate areas where African religion could be supportive of Christian theology and contribute to its restatement in terms relevant to the African context. The above contributions could be of useful procedure to examine the Church's theology of death and the dead by looking at its various parts traditionally defined, such as the doctrine of redemption and above all the re-writing the liturgy. To proceed along these lines could be very useful in that it could mean relating fresh thinking to specific areas of thought, such as continued concern for the living-dead, African communal values, ritual

killing etc. thus enabling discussion to proceed within recognisable and manageable limits.

However, the possibility that this procedure may become a limiting factor cannot be discounted, for, the rethinking would then be done in terms of areas of thought defined in the Western context. This might very well stifle greater originality and the result would be confused thinking. Much thought will have to be given to methodology to ensure that African theology of death and the dead within the context of their traditional beliefs and practices, develops as a real contribution to non-African theology, thus doing justice to the Africans' humanity and God-given ways of life and thoughts.

In conclusion it must be emphasised that African religious beliefs and practices and especially those concerning death and the dead have provided and continue to provide the African with a philosophical fountain head for the individual's life and for the ordering of society. African traditional religion concerning death and the dead emphasises the common origin of all humanity. It is the source from which a person's sense of dignity and responsibility flow. The search for security invariably begins here and for many, like the Effutus, it is also the last resort. Far from being redundant or anachronistic, African religious beliefs and practices concerning death and the dead inter alia have shown such a remarkable ability for staying relevant

that Africans have a responsibility to share their basic tenets with the rest of humanity.

It must be re-emphasised here that since religion impregnates the whole life of the African, any appeal one makes to traditional values and practices is ultimately religious. Furthermore, one must bear in mind that the basic element in religion does not consist of practices of religious places and persons but the beliefs that are manifested through them. So that even when modernization has modified ceremonies and other cultic practices, human beings will continue to depend on the beliefs as a rock on which to build. So, for instance, the belief in the living-dead, in the existence of spirits and witchcraft are a part of the Africans' recognition that life is not entirely materialistic. These beliefs are an expression of the yearning for life after life. Since the Supreme Being is believed to be the Source of Life, the search for the life-force is itself a groping for a closer and more personal relationship with the Supreme Being Himself.

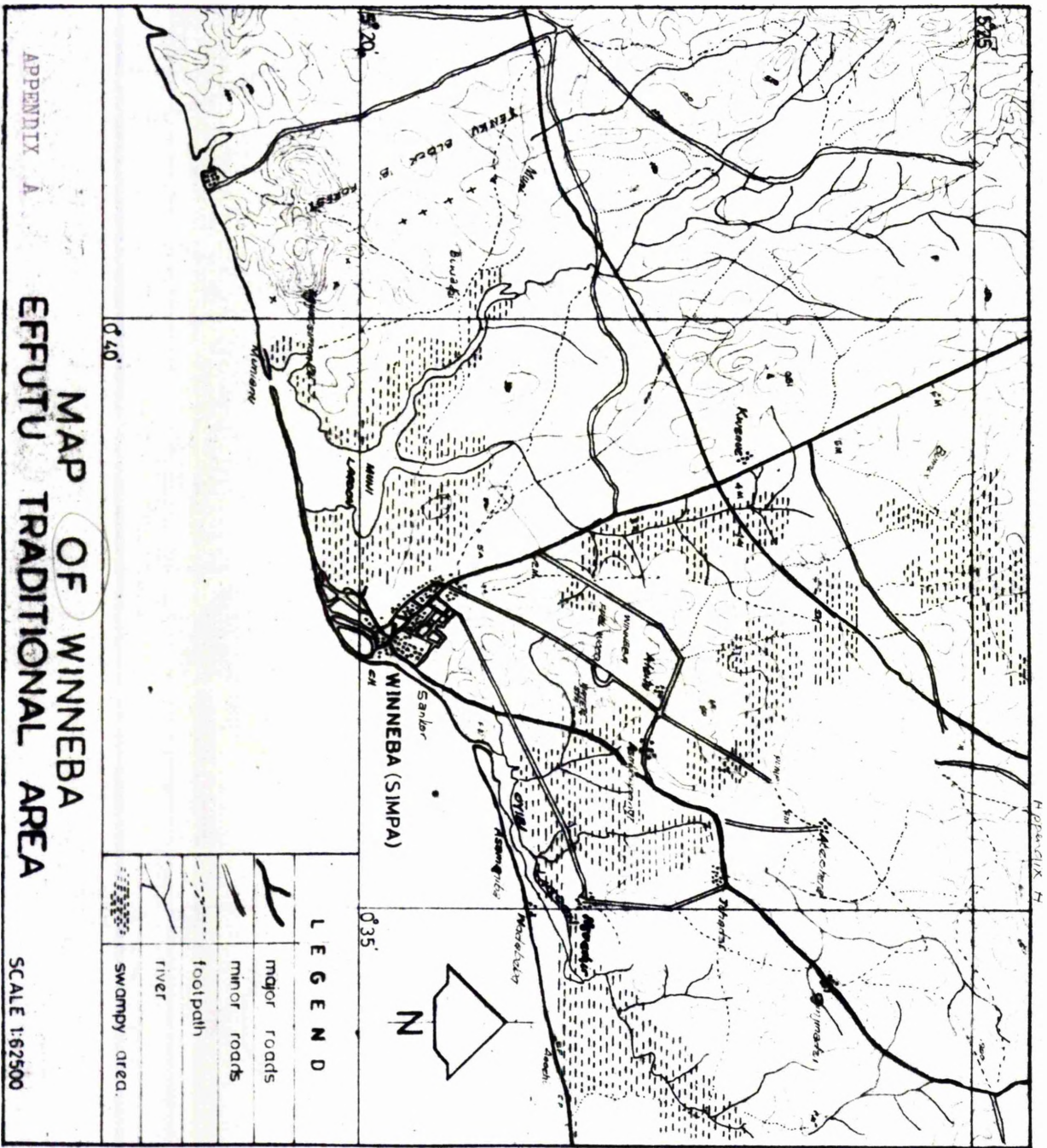
In order to contribute more effectively to the religious development of people, African Christian theologians have a duty to theologize from this context and to incorporate the authentic African idioms, especially those about death and the dead into Christian theology. Utilizing African religious beliefs about death and the

dead in Christian theology is not an attempt to assist Christianity to capture and domesticate the African spirit; rather it is an attempt to ensure that the African spirit revolutionizes Christianity to the benefit of all who adhere to it.

Finally, let it be re-emphasised that this thesis has concentrated on unravelling some of the theological problems confronting the Church's understanding of death and the dead with reference to traditional Effutu beliefs and practices. It has also shown the contributions and the attempts made to formulate African theology - which theology could interpret divine revelation to the understanding of the Effutu-African within the range of his culture, so that every disciple of Christ could gain contact with the Redeemer in a manner suitable to his own mentality and feelings. It is therefore important, when thinking of African theology, to remember that it will act on an African agenda. "It is useless for us to determine what we think an African theology ought to be doing: it will concern itself with questions that worry Africans . . ." ⁴¹ A great deal of data has been collected and sifted, possible relationships have been examined and hypotheses tested. The basic essential groundwork has been covered. More detailed work is now possible on this study. It is therefore

⁴¹ Andrew F. Walls, 'The Gospel as the Prisoner and Liberation of Culture' in Faith and Thought CVIII (1, 2) 1981, p. 47. For more on this see Kwesi A. Dickson, Theology In Africa, London: Orbis Books, 1984, pp. 108-139.

hoped that African theologians and pastors of 'souls' could make constant attempts to 'purify' elements of African traditional religion especially, those concerning death and the dead, and incorporate them into Christian Faith, for the benefit of the Effutu/Akan Christian and for the benefit of the Universal Church.



APPENDIX B

The Seven Principal Exogamous and Totemic Clans In
Effutu Traditional Area.

Name of Ebusua ¹	Totem ²	Symbolic meaning ³
1. Anona/Agona	Parrot Clan/ Akoo	Eloquence, Persuasiveness (Anotsew)
2. Kwonna/Kona	Buffalo	Conscientiousness (Enyikafamu)
3. Nsona/Nsonafo	Crow (Akonkroen)	Wisdom (Nyansa)
4. Twidan	Leopard (Osebo)	Aggressiveness (Mbanindze)
5. Ntwa	Dog (Bodom)	Adroitness, Skill (Ahoohar)
6. Aboradzi/ Eduanna	Plantain or Lion	Cunning (Anotsew)
7. Edwinadze/ Abrotu, Aown	Corn Stalk	Diplomacy (Siesienyi)

¹ cf. C. H. Harper, Notes on the Totemism of the Gold Coast, J.A.I., XXXVI, 1906, p. 179. Also see Frazer op. cit. pp. 557-558 and Meyerowitz, The Sacred State of the Akan, p. 30.

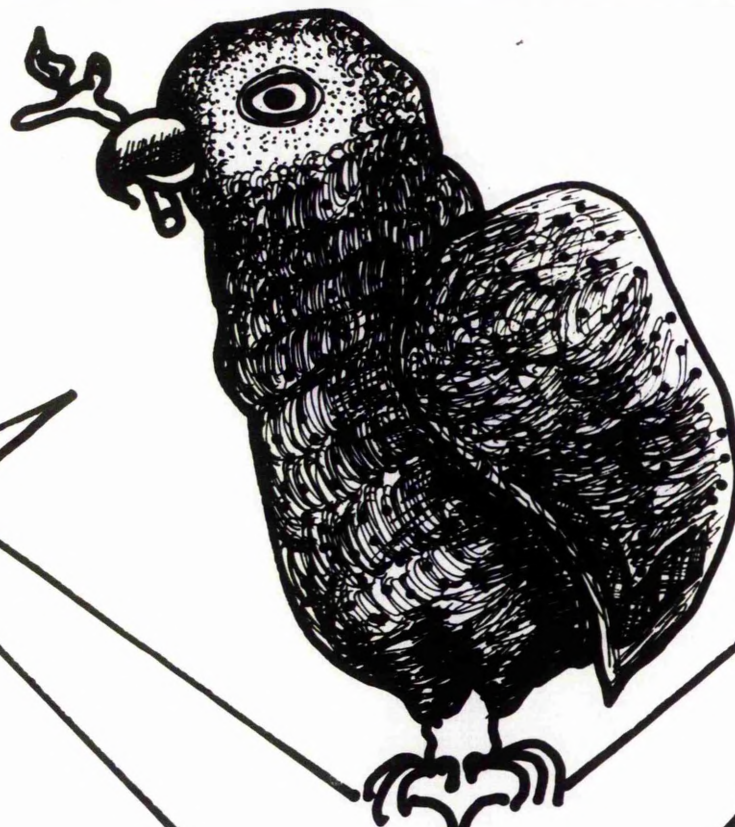
² For totems see Frazer op. cit. pp. 557-8.

³ Refer Meyerowitz, op. cit. p. 30. See Appendix B1 for totemic pictures.

APPENDIX B

Totemic Pictures of the
Effutu Clan.

ANONA. TEKYINA



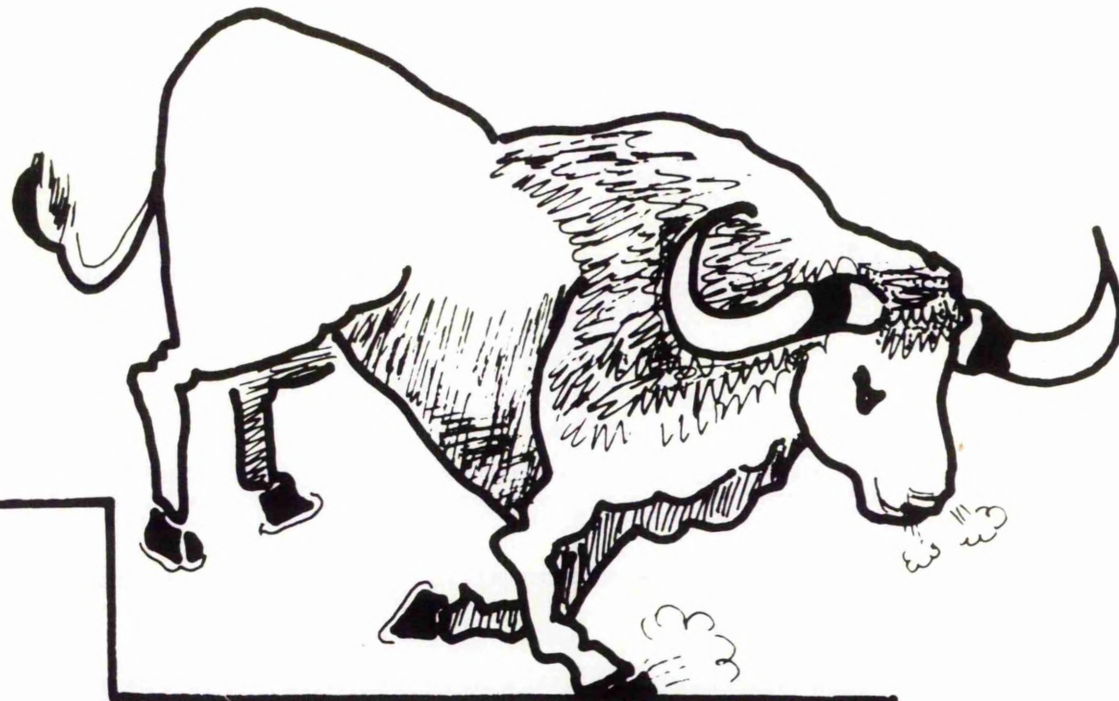
KU S U BANT SIR

ABORADZE, DEHYENA



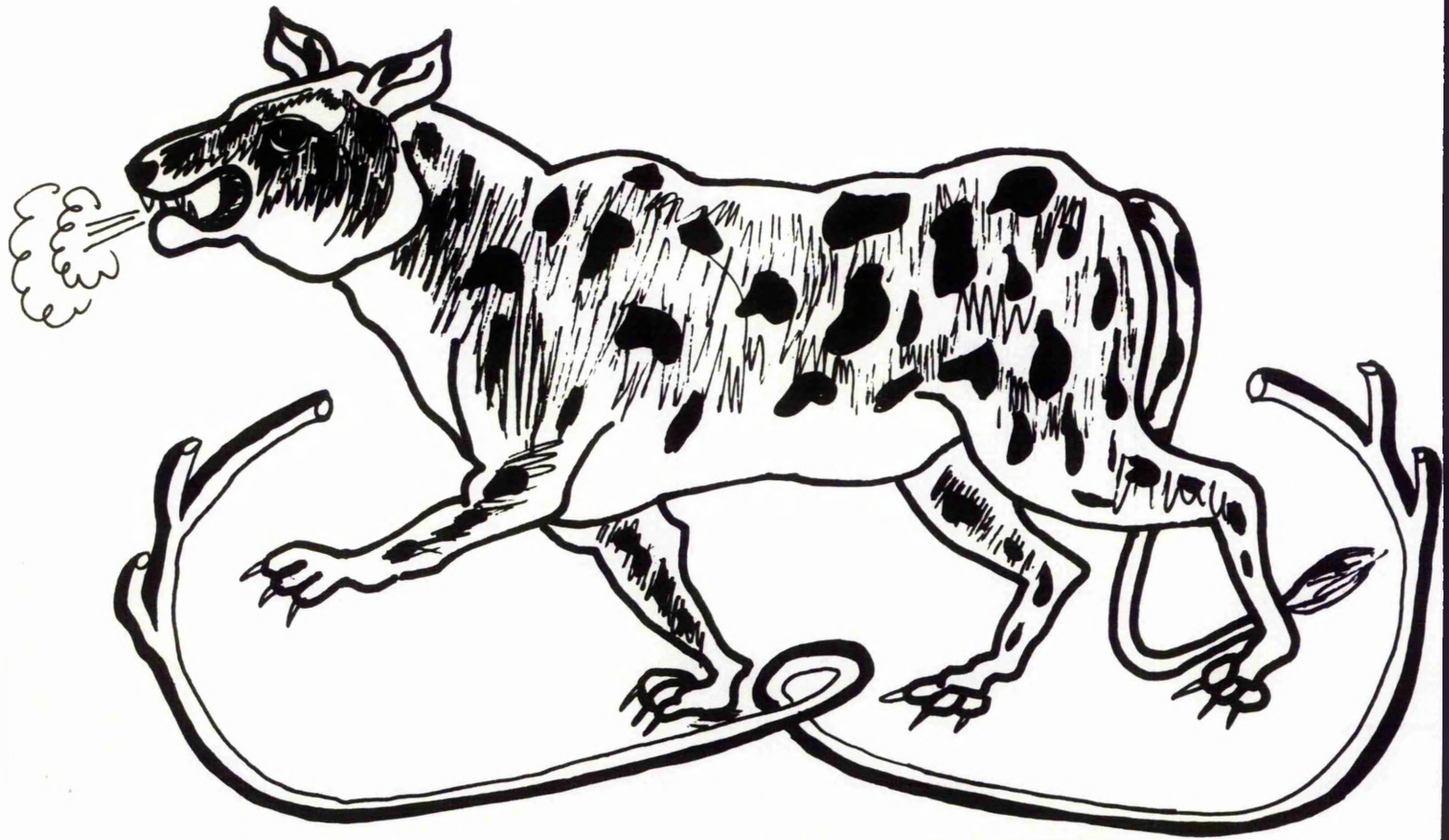
KUSUBANTSIR

KONA



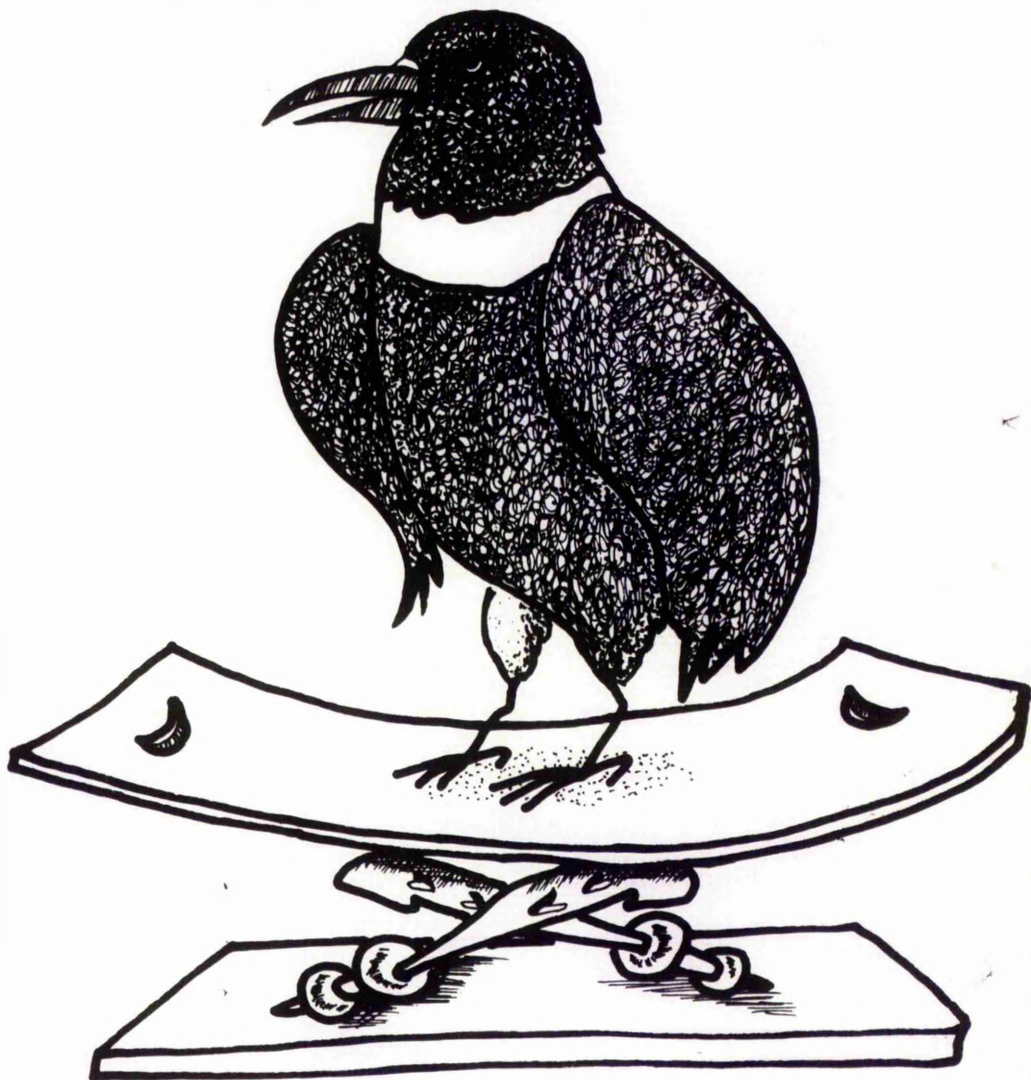
ABREN - KWA

TWIDAN



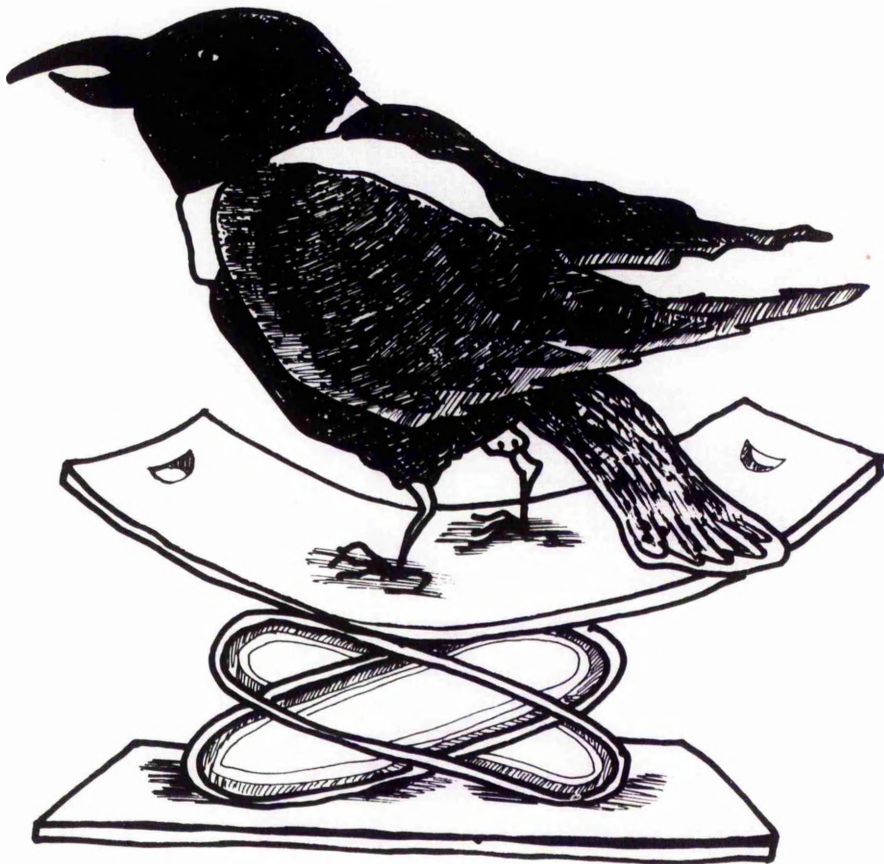
ABIRIM ODZIAMON

NSONAFO



WOMMPER - KWA

NSONAFO (WOMMPER-KWA)



APPENDIX C

Dirges and Song Laments

Descendants of the Parrot and member of the Anona Clan,
It is he that eats palm nuts on the tree and causes
some to fall on the ground, for other people to gather
up and eat. Is it not the way side bunch of palm nuts
that someone has cut away?

2.

Mother Aba, the great Breast that Children suck,
Mother Aba, the great wooden Food
Bowl around which children gather,
Mother, you know that when people
Confer together privately behind a house
They do so with people of their own
flesh and blood
Mother, you know our plight;
Don't go too far a way from us.

3.

Valiant Owusua,
The stranger on whom the citizen of the town depends,
Father, allow my children and me to depend on you,
So that we may all of us get something to eat,
Father on whom I wholly depend
When Father sees me, he will hardly recognise me.
He will meet me carrying an old torn mat and a horde of
flies.
Father on whom I wholly depend.
Killer-of-hunger,
My Saviour,
Father the Slender arm full of Kindness,
Father the Rover whose footprints are on all paths.

4.

Your grandmother is Amoa Awisi,
The woman who had many children but reared those of
others as well.
It is Amoa that hails from Hwerebe Akwasiase,
Awisi's grandchild hails from Anitibanso,
Where skulls are used in the Apirede dance.

5.

When Okani dies, the people of Dwaben are pleased.
When Okani is alive, the people of Dwaben do not like it.
Okani Nkwamfo Agyan Sewaa of Dwaben, remote place
of Dwaben.

Mother Buruwaa,
When you reach the outskirts of the town,
Mention your name so that strong men may carry you.
For you know that you come from Akotuwko mu.

6. ,

The Boar's grandchild that drinks from Dwadeasua water hole,
Ammu Dwamu who hails from Dinkyin,
Mother the fruitful woman,
Mother has died and left me behind:
With whom am I now here?¹

¹ J. H. Nketia, Funeral Dirges of the Akan People, N.Y., Negro
Univ. Press, 1969, pp. 10-13.

APPENDIX D

The speech and the address of the Ebusuapanyin:

The Ebusuapanyin in pouring the final libation speaks as follows:

"Onyankopon (God), now thou has taken . . .
Now he has become one of thy people,
Turn about and take him rightaway into your 'palace'
where all shall go after fulfilling the Akrabea (destiny)
We who are left in the world, give us peace.

Let his children who remain in the world be at peace.
He is not finished, his children will carry on his name.
In the future they will bear his name
Let no further evil befall us".¹

The Ebusuapanyin is now speaking to the dead:

". . . my brother (or my father if he was much older man)
now thou art one of God's people. Do not forget
us, let it be thy habit to speak on our behalf to thy
Father God . . . Let us beget children. May all evil
be taken away from us now, and may we remain in peace".

The Ebusuapanyin again addresses God:

"God, and you 'deadman'! Thou, God, madest man and Thou
also madest death. (Thou hast said) thou, man, I made thee
only that thou mightest perish. God, it is thy world.
Thou has shown us death this year. Now we here, we go
about with this debt, there has been no laughing with
happiness for us this year; thou has given us mourning.
God, turn about and take away the man Thou has taken.
Breathe on us with favourable breath".

He addresses the dead once more:

"And thou, so-and-so, art thou now in the great community,
of the dead? Where are all the people of our home? Eh!
It is the camp to which we all go at last. We who
remain in the world, may we be at peace. May the
children thou hast left behind thee rest in peace. Thou
who hast gone before do not close thine eyes to us. Thou
art a person of God (Onyankopon). May there be nothing
further had for us to see".

¹ See E. E. Evans-Pritchard, Nuer Religion, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1956, p. 148, who has almost the same text which tallies with that of Effutu/Akan text.

APPENDIX D 1

The following is the full programme of the Roman Catholic practice held at Winneba in Effutu Traditional Area on 28th April, 1985, on behalf of one Kwamina Taylor.²

Burial Service - Sunday, 28th April, 1985

Part One

The funeral procession is met at the Church door by the priest vested in white accompanied by servers carrying the processional cross and paschal candle.

1. Processional Hymn: Silently the Shades of Evening.
2. INTROIT.
3. Kyrie - St. Martha
4. Hymn - By the Choir - "Gyae Su Gyae Nkombo".
5. First Lesson: Psalm CXVI, Ditexi quoniam.
6. Hymn - By the Choir - "Opanyin Pa Ko".
7. Gospel Reading: John XIV, 1-6.
8. Hymn - By the Singing Band - Ben Ntsi na Owu bo Hu.

(b) Bra Sunsum Kronkron Bra.

9. Homily: By the Priest In Charge wearing a white vestment.³
The theme of the sermon was on the Resurrection of Christ and its emphasis was not on fear, grief and loss but rather on God's faithfulness to his word and on Christian hope; though it retained a solemnity which reflected the awe which all human beings rightly feel in the face of the dark mystery of death.⁴

² This was in the course of the writer's field work in April, 1985. The full programme is in the writer's possession.

³ This was brought about by the Second Vatican Council which cancelled the black vestments worn expressing a mood of sorrow. The wearing of the white vestment reflects a re-centring of Catholic theology on the resurrection, a return to a view of death, after-life and judgement which is more substantially rooted in the Holy Scriptures. (This was obtained from the Father In Charge of Winneba Roman Catholic Church - the Rev. Father Koos Jansen, during the writer's field work).

⁴ This was what the writer recorded.

10. Credo - St. Martha.

11. Bidding Prayers: This began with a specifically paschal and baptismal reference:

Priest: Let us call trustingly upon God the Almighty Father, who raised Christ his son from the dead, for the salvation of the living and the dead.

Reader: Our brother K in his baptism the seed of eternal life, May he enjoy the company of the saints for ever.

12. Offertory: Choir sings -

(a) Ewuradze Nye Me Guanhwefo
(The Lord is my Shepherd)

(b) Nyame Gye Me Kra

(c) O rest in the Lord.

13. Sanctus - St. Martha.

14. Agnus Dei - St. Martha.

15. Communion Song - By the Singing Band:

(a) Dofo a Mayew No Wo Hen

(b) Okwantunyi

(c) Minyim a Nkye Mede Mekyir Gyae.

Libera

1. Hymn - Oetwam Ko.

2. Prayer and Incensing etc: The body was revered with incense and with holy water. The liturgy stressed the unity of body and spirit and looked forward to the resurrection on those terms. The resurrection of the body is not thought of as the gathering up of biological molecules. It is the mysterious re-constitution of the whole person, body and soul, through that power which raised Christ "the first fruits of those who sleep". The last communion received is known as the 'Viaticum' 'food for a journey'.⁵

3. Laying of wreath.

⁵ See also John Prickett ed. Death, Guildford and London, Lutterworth Educational, 1980, p. 52.

4. Anthem - Worthy Is The Lamb.
5. Dead March In Saul.
6. Recessional Hymn: Minyim Ber a Medze Bowu.

Part Two

At the Graveside.

1. Processional Hymn: Nde Roko.
2. PRAYERS.
3. Incensing and Sprinkling of Holy Water.
4. Song: Choir (Hyedzen)
5. PRAYERS: This was a prayer of commendation petitioning that "the gates of paradise may be opened" to the departed in 'The sure hope that he, together with all who have died in Christ, will rise again with Christ on the last day' and the response, 'Eternal rest grant to him, O Lord: And let light perpetual shine upon him'.
6. Anthem: HALLELUYAH CHORUS - By the Mass Choir.
7. Last Post: By the bugle or horn blower.

APPENDIX D 2

VARIOUS STEPS FOR THE FUNERAL SERVICE OF THE
MUSAMA DISCO CHRISTO CHURCH.

1. While the coffined corpse is placed in position in front of the Church or the frontage of the funeral place, the pastor should stand at the Head Side with the choristers and mourners around.
2. The Choir or the congregation should sing a song to be followed by the reading of the three Bible passages hereunder:-
 - (a) 2 Cor. 5:1-10
 - (b) Psalm 49:1-20
 - (c) Job 7:1-21.
3. What abundant peace has man got? What privilege does he expect to enjoy after this troublesome world avoiding physical death?
 - (d) Psalm 89:48
 - (e) Genesis 2:17
4. This is an important covenant and an order which everyman should expect to enter, sooner or later. Therefore let no man boast on the wealth he has amassed or corruptible possession. He must not boast for there is no profit in them for his soul. Avoid the wisdom of the world and follow righteousness.
 - (f) 1 Cor. 3:1:19,20
 - (g) Roman 3:10-12.
5. O God help us to do thy will; Yes Lord fill us with Thy Holy Spirit, so that we can follow Thy good directions to move our steps aright. While death like clouds do surround us our consolation is that they that trust in the Lord and obey His commandments shall enjoy everlasting life.
 - (h) John 14:1-3.

Pastor to ring bell 7 times + + + + +

6. Pastor:- Glory be to our Lord Jesus Christ and His Holy Spirit.

Response:- As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be - Amen.

AT THE GRAVESIDE

7. In a procession led by the pastor in front of the coffin into the cemetery - Congregation flanking the coffin.

8. On entering the cemetery, the pastor reads:-

Every farmer has a period to close from work. It is time now that a farmer takes his rest. He is like a traveller who travelled to a very far strange land, and time has come for him to return home. What a joy? What peace awaits him home. The Heavenly host will gladly embrace him and the eternal home shall be his forever. In the midst of life we are in death. While the servant of death through protracted illness does assail us day and night warning us that we are destined to die.

Verily, however firm a man stands, he is indeed a wind. Yes man moves about as a shadow. Yes he troubles his soul in vain. He heaps up treasures and does not know who may gather. Glory be to our Lord Jesus Christ who has delivered us from the second death. He has given us eternal life. Glory be to the name of God - Amen.

9. (Here put the coffin into the grave).
10. Sing a song.
11. Pastor's admonition.
12. Sing a song.
13. Interment:- Pastor reads:- "Lord God, Thou who art the destroyer of death, the Giver of life, today we commit into thy hands Brother/Sister . . ., accept his/her soul through Thy merciful grace, through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ - Amen.
14. Pastor's Prayer:- Merciful Father, Thou who art the fountain of Grace and Mercy, the light of all who have departed this life. We pray that in as much as we have committed the remains of Bro/Sis. . . . into Thy hands, forgive him/her all his/her faults, and remember their grace shown to the robber, so that this Bro/Sis. may be privileged to enjoy that same promise. Protect him from all the threats of the evil one so that he may not be swerved from the true path. Bathe him in Thy precious blood. Let thy guiding spirit guide him to await in paradise, through the promise of our Lord Jesus Christ - Amen.

15. Sing a Song.

16. Pastor Continues:- This promise is our expectation,
so we do not worry.

Job 1:21 (Naked came I etc.)

Jer. 22:10 (Weep not for the dead etc.)

Ezek. 24:16 (Son of man, behold etc.)

1 Thes. 4:13-18 (Brethren we shall not have you
ignorant etc.)

Pastor:- Lord have mercy upon us

Response:- Christ have mercy upon us

Pastor:- Lord have mercy upon us.

17. The Lord's Prayer "Our Father . . . temptation - Amen."

18. Benediction and Blessing - Glory be to our Lord Jesus
Christ who is the destroyer of death, the
giver of life, who rules through the Holy
Spirit forever and ever - Amen.

19. Laying of wreath and other parting flowers and leaves.⁶
Departure.

⁶ This was obtained during the burial of Madam Ekua Kaadze on 9th November, 1985 at Winneba. This was during the writer's field work.

APPENDIX E

Puberty/Bradze Text in Fante.

Elderly Woman: Nana Eku begye nsa nom
Nhyiamfo : Wie ... ampa!
Elderly Woman: Nana Kwaaba nsa!
Nhyiamfo : Tsie na atse.
Elderly Woman: Twerampon nsa, Anona mpanyimfo
hom mbegye nsa nom.
Yefre hom nde wo hom mbowa
owo de wodze boa obaa yi ntsi,
Woma onya mba pii.
Nsa O, nsa!
Twerampon nsa.

25:9:83

APPENDIX E 1

Text of Libation poured during Marriage

Ebusuapanyin: Omanfo wofre yie!
Amanfo : Yie mbra.
: Tsie na atse.
Ebusuapanyin: Anonaebusua nsa O
Yehyia mu wo wo mba hon awar ntsi,
Nsa O!
Yehia hom mbowa ma hon asetsena mu,
Anona mpanyimfo, pa hon mbusu biara,
Hom mbowa hon awar mu.
Wonya mba pii; ntafo mu ntafo.
Mpanyimfo hom mbegye nsa yi.

4:8:85

APPENDIX E 2

Akomasi Libation

Kweku Ananse awenne, wotoa ebi bo,
Obarimba Ayirebi, wananse awenne yia,
wotoa ebi bo.
Odabisese Ayirebi, owansen de bo,
wotoa ebi bo.
Kweku Ananse awenne, wotoa ebi bo.
Kurotwiamansa nye Akyekyer twa abe a,
anka hena beko asenhua!
Okyere Kotoko sebi. Onye hwana?
Onye Obirempon Ayirebi.

Odabikese Ayirebi obeko asenhua OO,
Okatakyi, okyereben nkyirefua woyi no hwana?
Woyi no Obirempon Ayirebi
Okatakyi! Okatakyi! Okatakyi!
Okatakyi e! Woys obanyin
Eys obanyin papaapa;
Woys obanyin dadaada.

19:9:85

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I. ORAL TRADITION OF EFFUTU

The oral traditional accounts which form the basis of the historical and social anthropological background to the study and ritual texts were recorded, transcribed, translated and synthesized by the writer. As said in the introduction, most of the accounts were unstructured conversations and observations. The method used was that the writer interviewed a number of different persons on the same topic and attended religious rituals in almost all the Effutu Traditional Area. This enabled the writer to cross-check information. Where it is necessary to stress a source of information in the work, the name and rank of the informant is given in the text. This method of interview, observation, participation and cross-checks is necessary to avoid one of the main defects of oral traditions. This is the attempt by various persons, chiefs, elders and priests to hide certain parts of their traditions to present a glorious, but never an inglorious past.

II. ARCHIVES

a) Ghana National Archives, Accra. GNA.

The resources of the National Archives of Ghana, both in their breadth and in their accessibility, offer an invaluable tool for the student of local and national history of the country.

Following is a list and brief description of the various classification concerned with Effutu Traditional Area affairs in the GNA.

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- (ii) ADM. 1680/1689. Notes of Evidence taken at the Commission of Enquiry into the Constitution of Effutu by J. T. Furley, Secretary for Native Affairs. 5th-23rd October, 1922.
- (iii) ADM. 1690. Report on Effutu by J. T. Furley. 15th October-21st December, 1922.
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- (viii) EC. 5/23. Basel Mission Papers. Census Report of the Fanti Mission and Nsaba. 1886-1916.

- (ix) EC. 36. Drafts of Annual Reports and of Anthropological Studies, anti-witchcraft, fetish, etc. by Rev. Lockmann. 1911.

b) Methodist Church Ghana Archives, Accra. MCGA.

Although the materials on this archives are not under any systematic classification as the GNA, they provide detailed insight into the development of the Wesleyan/Methodist Mission Church in the Gold Coast/Ghana. The materials consist of circuits, synod and conference reports in the 19th and 20th centuries, and are as a result of clear mission or church policy - explicit if not comprehensive in their reporting on political, economic and social affairs. Apart from the MCGA we have at Winneba Society and Local Council of Churches' minutes record reports.

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